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SERMONS
HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL

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PREFACE

It will be obvious that the sermons here collected have neither a consecutive character nor a unity of immediate purpose. Preached for the most part in connection with anniversaries or memorials, the purpose of each was to call attention to some lesson or example belonging to the particular occasion, whether personal, ecclesiastical, or national.

Some of the thoughts are necessarily recurrent, and the occasions lay widely apart both in time and place—facts which will explain and perhaps excuse the repetition here and there of the same moral or illustration.

Though, from the nature of the case, the book offers no solid or original contribution to theological thought, it may perhaps serve the humbler purpose of recalling wholesome and stimulating memories which attach to special days or special gatherings. If any of us should thus be helped, at an anxious time in the story of Church and Realm, to thank God and to take courage, the hope which has led to the publication of the volume will have been satisfied.

R. T. C.

Canterbury,
Easter, 1911.

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I. EDWARD WHITE BENSON*

They buried him in the city of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, both toward God, and toward His House.

2 CHRONICLES XXIV. 16.

THE words tell of the burial of a great ecclesiastic, Jehoiada, the statesman High-Priest, buried with special honour in a special place among the great, after a public life of notable activity and high and sacred service as the official leader of a National Church.

It was no ordinary burial. 'They buried him in the city of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, both toward God, and toward His House.'

My friends, you all see why I choose this text to-day. It was so chosen once before. Close upon three hundred years ago a Bishop of this Province made it the text of a sermon (it is said to have been memorable: I know not if it still exists) upon the burial of a great Archbishop of Canterbury—John Whitgift—one who had served the Church and

* Canterbury Cathedral, July 9, 1899.

Realm with faithfulness and courage under the reign of a great English Queen. The association may be allowed, I hope, to give a fresh significance to the text in connection with our great service yesterday,* and with the personal memories it must have awakened in most of us, the thoughts it must have stirred in all.

Nearly three years have passed since we laid Edward White Benson to rest, here in his Cathedral, first of the Archbishops so to rest since the days of Queen Elizabeth; and the more steadfastly and fearlessly we look—with the help which mellowing time begins to give—upon the man and his work, the more earnestly, and even eagerly, can we apply to him the words of the sacred Chronicler: for, indeed, he too 'had done good in Israel'—in his native land—his native Church—'both toward God, and toward His House.'

It is easy, we think, in studying Bible history or the history of the early Church, to see how God fashioned His several workers for their special tasks, and then set each to do just that thing—a Moses—a David—an Isaiah—a Daniel—a John Baptist—a Paul—a Cyprian—an Augustine—and so on. It is necessarily far harder, far more dangerous, because far more conjectural, to try to see the like thing going on still.

* The unveiling of Archbishop Benson's monument in the Cathedral.

And yet surely we sometimes can, and it is often well to try. I want to say something—it shall be brief and simple—about the public work God gave Archbishop Benson to do, and how he did it. Not many months ago, in the village church of Addington, on an occasion, in its small way, not dissimilar to this, I was privileged to speak of him as he lived in his own country home, the place he loved best. Of Archbishop Whitgift a friend wrote, 'The Archbishop had ever a great affection to lie at his house at Croydon, for the sweetness of the place, especially in summer time; whereby also he might sometimes retire himself from the multiplicity of businesses and suitors.'* The sentence might have been written of Archbishop Benson without the alteration of a word. To-day, in his Metropolitical Cathedral, in connection with the unveiling of his monument, we may look for a few minutes—I will not dare to say at 'his Archiepiscopate and its place in English history'—but at some of the simpler and more certain characteristics of his public life, its aim, its gist, its fruit.

Archbishop Tait died on Advent Sunday seventeen years ago. His primacy, whatever else it did, had taught men to realize better the practical power of the Church of England as a force, an incomparable force, for God and good. He broadened its basis in the national life. In the words of his epitaph,

* 'Sir George Paule's "Life" in Wordsworth's Ecclesiastical Biographies,' iii. 553.

drawn by the master-hand of Dr. Vaughan, and inscribed in the transept behind me :

> 'Wise to know the time and resolute to redeem it,
> He had one aim :
> To make the Church of England more and more
> The Church of the People.'

That heritage of purpose and of duty his successor —already a tried and trusted friend—took up with reverent and whole-hearted sympathy. But he had something distinctive, something fresh, to do, and, by the grace of God, he did it for fourteen eventful years. The English people had to learn from him to understand afresh the glory and beauty of their inheritance, the sacred harmony, the Divinely ordered development of the Church of England in every stage of its long history, its distinctive definite place in the Church Catholic, and its quite peculiar task in the evangelization of the world. He made people keen to be Churchmen and Churchwomen, because they understood better what it meant. He evoked a new enthusiasm among them for our corporate Christian life, an enthusiasm which should rest, not on any lower or more material reason than the very highest, namely, that thus they could best take up in their turn the trust which God had, all down the centuries, been giving to the English people ; that thus, in short, they could best do Christ's work in England.

It always seemed to me that the Archbishop was able, to a quite unique degree, to piece together, as

it were, the past, the present, and the future, in the Church's life, and to make the whole glow and burn.

Let him speak for himself.

'We are prone,' he says, in a noteworthy sermon, 'to talk as if we were always at the end of things, as if all were failure which was not yet fruit. I rather think that we stand now at a time when the fruit of long discipline is to appear, and the future to be richer and greater for the Church than all the past.... What the Church has to deal with is the vast and vigorous world. It is not by the perpetual fingering of her own implements, her "organa"—which some people call organization—that work will be done. The great way for the Church to keep her position is that the world should find her what they found her to be who first accepted her—find her churches and her clergy to be homes, fathers, brothers to the people.'*

This enthusiasm, ever sparkling with a quiet glow in his own life, found outward expression in a score of different ways. Whence his unending joy in the fabric of our old churches, great or small, from this Cathedral to the humblest parish church: a thankful joy, illuminated and guided by his profound knowledge of every historical or artistic detail? It was no mere archæological hobby; the stonework of the old building was to him the visible chain, the spoken language, which united the daily work of the living

* 'Christ and His Times,' pp. 184, 208.

Church (whose every step he was watching, stimulating, controlling) with the same Church-work in its so different setting half a dozen centuries ago.

'If ever we are disposed,' he said, in speaking of the fabric and the life of Lincoln Cathedral—'if ever we are disposed to contrast bygone ages unfavourably with our own, we may ask ourselves whether we think the systems we have arranged, the wheels we have just seen begin to turn, will run as freely, will work as adaptably to the needs of 700 years to come, as the great institution of the past moves now when 700 years have passed over it, age after age ready to become young again? YES, we may say, if ours, too, is built on humanity's needs, on a devout humility and eager acceptance of God's work in man and through man. But not otherwise; not if we mistake troubled rills for fountains, and seek our immortality on earth, and hold doubt to be more wise and strong than faith. If we build into the same building and trust the same corner-stone, we shall stand like them and share their strength (for life is one and indivisible), and so shall we be part of the Living Temple of God.'*

Hear him again, as he speaks from St. Augustine's Chair on these very steps to the assembled Bishops of our Church throughout the world:

'Welcome, disciples of the great determination to "refuse fables," and seek the inspiration of the

* 'Many Ministries: the Master's Goodbye,' p. 19.

Church at the fountain head of inspired reason. Welcome to the chair which, when filled least worthily, most takes up its own parable, and speaks of unbroken lines of government and law and faith. . . . Round this chair have clustered the glorious memorials you see through ages. . . . We know how dear to you is this sanctuary of our fathers and yours—yes, of "your Father and our Father." And even because of the potency of its deep appeal to us to be holy in worship, pure in doctrine, strong in life—even for this appeal's sake we bid you here remember the pregnant words of Gregory to Augustine himself: *Non pro locis res—sed pro bonis rebus loca amanda sunt.* Love not the things for the sake of the genius of the place: love the place for the good things wrought there.'*

Just so with the Church's liturgies and worship. His almost humorous affection for the quaint archaic language of early collects and hymns—his reverent and intelligent interest in the historic origin and meaning of some odd or distorted bit of ritual or rubric—say Italian, Assyrian, Coptic, British—was again no pedantic crotchet. Ever and anon there was something there that spoke to his keen ear of a continuous life under every variety of guise, a continuous life that was Divine.

To the rough-and-ready popular view, perhaps the two greatest things in his life were the building of

* History of the 'Lambeth Conferences' (S.P.C.K.), p. 39.

Truro Cathedral and the delivery of the Lincoln Judgment. I do not say that such an estimate is wrong. I do say that in both cases most people miss the natural and simple connection of what he did with the rest of his life. It was not that he bethought him in a new-formed diocese of devising some plan to evoke enthusiasm, and concentrate conflicting interests, and so decided to build a cathedral—but that to him the organic life of the Church must—simply must—find expression in a cathedral, with all that to one who had thought and studied and prayed about it from his boyhood, the word 'cathedral' implied. Read the sermon he preached twelve years ago, when, with a full heart, he took part as Archbishop in the consecration of the cathedral he had founded in faith ten years before, if you would know how to him as an English Churchman it was alike the outcome and the means —the fruit and the seed—of nearly every force for life within the Church.

In almost exactly the same way we could see, if time allowed, how his amazing exhibition of power and knowledge in his great ritual Judgment was no isolated *tour de force*, but rather an opportunity strangely, providentially given in the Church's Divinely ordered life, for the exercise by her Chief Pastor of a regulative power which none other was so well qualified to wield effectively for good. And yet all the while no man in England in those summer

months felt so keenly—so almost humiliatingly—as he the comparative insignificance and triviality of some of the questions on which time and toil were thus expended. The world will read in his biography, a few months hence, his scathing scorn for some of the disputations to which he none the less patiently, as in duty bound, gave ear. The facts of his life will stand out soon, I think, in juster proportion than they now do. His strength, perhaps his weaknesses too, will be more adequately weighed.

I should like to dwell, if I had time, upon what I think is, perhaps, the most enduring, the most far-reaching, of all the gifts he gave to the Church of England. I mean his teaching of the true principles and proportions of the duty of Foreign Missions. Like the greatest work of many of our best men, it was seen less in its exercise than in its fruit. I think it is hardly too much to say that the whole popular view of Missions—aim, scope, system, results—has been materially, though at the moment imperceptibly, changed in England by the line he took and the words he spoke.

I long to see his missionary speeches collected and edited in a separate volume. Hardly one of them but strikes some suggestive, unfamiliar chord. Some of them at the time gave palpable offence. They do not, I think, do so now. His was, whether in home or foreign work, the sort of courage which

is often not valued, not even recognized, till its fruits are seen, perhaps long years afterwards.

Four or five times in his public life he stood alone, or nearly alone, among his friends and counsellors. But he stood firm, and the issue—so far as I can judge—has shown in each case that he was right, and his advisers wrong.

When he resolved to revive, on somewhat different lines, the curious Anglican bishopric in Jerusalem, which was at the moment ready to perish, the protests from his friends in both the great schools of Churchmanship were, for different reasons, loud and long. A bare handful of people were with him in his plan. He was immovable, and the issue is known and read of all.

When the question arose of reviving for active exercise, there and then, the Archbishop's court for the trial of a Bishop, the opposition from the great majority of those who would have been deemed his wisest counsellors was more vehement than people care now to remember. With quiet, unobtrusive courage he persevered. Not many, I think, will now say that he was wrong.

A few years later he gave intensest pain and disappointment to some who knew him a little, and to a few of those who knew and loved him best, by his uncompromising and persistent refusal (the facts will be known some day) to write one letter or to speak one word—even for the furtherance of the highest

and noblest aim—which might afterwards perchance be twisted into the semblance of a request to the See of Rome to investigate the question of our English Orders. Had he shown less firmness in those critical weeks, the Church of England, so far as I can judge, would stand, or seem to stand, in a different position to-day.

Time forbids me to run on thus.

We laid him here in his Cathedral, 'because he had done good in Israel.' I have merely touched upon a few prominent acts. But what matters most in the life of a Primate of our Church is the life and work of every day: the regular dealing with each petty problem as it calls in turn for settlement, so that a 'usage' is born, and then extends and grows. What does the man really care for, as a guide to action? What principles, what sympathies, what hopes, what purposes, underlie the spoken and the written words?

For my part, I have known on earth no other man who more markedly than Archbishop Benson made the Christian Creed in its entirety the touchstone for his daily life, and proved its capacity to meet his every need. It was no mere trust in a loving God, however fervent and absolute that trust. It was the deliberate, thoughtful, intelligent application of the complete creed of an English Churchman, the full teaching of the English Prayer-Book, to the problems, difficulties, sorrows, sins, failures, of modern English life. It was so at every epoch of his busy

life—Cambridge, Rugby, Wellington, Lincoln, not less than Truro and Lambeth. He was pre-eminently and distinctively the loyal English Churchman—loyal, with a deep and thoughtful enthusiasm, not only to the doctrines of the Church, as based every one of them upon the impregnable rock of Holy Scripture, but to an unswerving belief in their daily vivifying power amid the strifes and perplexities of the passing years.

In his earlier life there was comparatively little to bring him face to face with what we call the 'social questions' of the time. In those years it was first upon Education, secular and sacred, in its various grades, and then upon the peculiar life of Cornwall and its people, that he made his sound, large-hearted Prayer-Book Churchmanship to tell.

But no sooner was he called to the larger Ministry at the centre of the nation's life than he evoked—confidently evoked—from the same treasure-house the things he needed for that wider purpose. You will find in his farewell speeches at Truro how he already saw something of what Lambeth and its life must mean—Lambeth, as he loved to remember and remind, set in full view of the palace of kings and parliaments, to be at once a suggestion of other and deeper needs and itself a means of meeting them. With the marvellous aptitude he retained, unlike most other men, of acquiring and assimilating new thoughts in later life, taking up fresh duties, adapting

himself to new needs, he set himself from the outset of his Primacy to regard no part of the English people's life as outside his interests, far less as outside the Church's range. 'Christ and His Times' is a book that glows with thoughts which would, twenty years before, have been almost strange to the writer himself. It has become a mere commonplace—thank God for it—to quote his recurring phrase that 'these are the times of Christ, and we are His contemporaries.'

'They buried Him in the city of David, among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, both toward God and toward His House.'

My friends, he being dead yet speaketh. What he taught us is understanded of us all, is applicable to our common needs, is in its measure—in our measure—attainable by us every one.

In his own words:*

'We know that the Master is with us all the days. We must do all we can to help each other feel His presence in our own short day.'

* 'Christ and His Times,' p. 179.

II. FREDERICK TEMPLE AND WILLIAM WOOD STEPHENS*

This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou didst send.

St. John xvii. 3.

'A happy Christmas.' Has the familiar greeting been this week unused by some of us in our Cathedral city, or, if used, has it jarred a little upon the ear? Bereavement and trouble, to a quite extraordinary degree, are abroad, and many of the sunniest homes in Winchester are stricken with sorrow or clouded with deep anxiety. To such, how the Lesson of this morning has rung out: '*Strengthen ye the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a feeble heart: Be strong; Fear not.*' For such, whether in bereavement or in the suspense of anxiety, the heartfelt prayers of every one of us go up this morning to the God of all comfort.

* Winchester Cathedral, December 28, 1902. Dean Stephens died December 22, and Archbishop Temple December 23.

There may be many who have felt that it would be unnatural, at such a juncture, to hail these darkly shadowed days as a time of happiness. Look quietly at this thought for a moment. If by 'happiness' we mean simply or mainly 'mirth,' then the instinct which would bid us here just now avoid such a phrase is sound and true. But beyond question happiness does not mean simply or mainly mirth. It ranges upon an altogether higher plane. Roughly speaking, we may, I think, say that happiness means the spring and buoyancy and hopefulness of life, and the power of actively employing to the utmost whatever strength our life has. I am sure that as you think about it you will feel this to be a true account of what happiness really means. It means, in short, life at its best, whether the best be great or small. Does not that explain why Christmas, of all days, is the special time for our wishing one another happiness?

We are recalling what a human life at its best can be. We are wishing one another some share, some bit of a life similar to that—the pattern Life—in its force, in its quiet trust and hopefulness, in its love, in its power of blessing and brightening other people's lives. So 'A happy Christmas' comes to mean a power of getting into touch with that life of His, or—as He Himself, our Lord and Master, expressed it—of 'knowing Him' in a way that nothing, literally nothing, can destroy or sever. '*This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only*

true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou didst send.' 'Didst send,' that is, on Christmas Day.

My friends, if these things are so, the strain of the anxiety now overshadowing so many of our homes, or even the darkness of bereavement, so real to us and to England to-day, will not avail to mar at its source or in its essence the unalterable, the undying, joy of Christmastide, the joy which belongs to the coming into the world of the Life which was, and is, 'the light of men.' The darkness is still there. He does not take it away; but in its midst, unquenchably, persistently, the light shines on and the darkness overcometh it not. He knew on earth—He knoweth now—what the darkness of bereavement is. '*Jesus wept.*' He knows what we are feeling in Winchester to-day, not in one home circle, but in many; what in Winchester Cathedral and its precincts, above all, we are thinking and feeling and praying now.

It would be unnatural, it would be in no sense according to His will, that we should not feel it poignantly and deeply. It would be ungrateful to the Lord, who gave us here for a time, for our help and pattern, the teacher and friend whom we yesterday laid to rest under the shadow of the walls whose every stone he knew and loved with such a reverent care, and for whose stability and adornment he laboured with such untiring and effective zeal.

The centuries have taught us what it means for the inspiring and sobering and uplifting of English life

to-day that we should have in our central places these glorious cathedrals, rich with tokens and memories of the chequered story of how the England that we know and love has been wrought into what she is by the prowess and the piety of stalwart men of other days in Church and Realm. And it matters much that for this wealth of graven story, for these shrines of the continuous prayers of a thousand changing years—and no land, remember, in Christendom can boast in this respect a heritage like ours—it matters much that the chosen guardians and ministers should be men with knowledge to estimate adequately the greatness of their historic trust, and with devotion to sustain on its true level the spirit of the prayers and praises which give to the whole its noblest meaning and its purest unity.

Merely thus to state what is needed is to recall at once to you what Winchester—nay, what our whole Church and people—have lost in him whose ripe learning, whose comprehensive grasp of the history of the English Church, and whose whole-hearted loyalty and devotion to its doctrine and discipline, to its Liturgy, its usages, its holy rule, have enhanced so greatly to this diocese the usefulness of this our central shrine. In losing him from among us here we have lost not a loved presence only, but a living power.

It is not easy to acquire familiarity with the days when these massive transepts first grew into life, or when that wonderful nave, under the magic wand

of a master, embodied in imperishable stone an object-lesson of the Church's adaptation of the old life into the new, or when our great altar screen began to teach people in sculpture and stone the story it has re-told to us so nobly in these later days, the story of the saints whom

> 'God set before us in the way,
> Lest we should faint or stray.'

It is not easy, it is not common, to know these things as he knew them, to tell them as he told them to us all: sometimes in the spoken words, familiar to so many here, sometimes in the books which lay every student of Church history, whether medieval or, what is equally important, contemporary, under a permanent obligation to his pen.

And yet—and yet—it is true to say that what we who knew and loved him are thinking of this morning is the man rather than his work. That simple, guileless, unobtrusive, diligent, prayerful life, with its quiet enthusiasm for all things pure and lovely, and its chivalrous defence of any and every cause that might seem to be unfairly judged—that is what we dwell upon in bright and sunny memory to-day, while our prayers for those he loved go up to God. His sun hath gone down—all unexpectedly to us who mourn—while it was yet day. But he works on, depend upon it, otherwhere than here. '*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*'

'Nor dare to sorrow with increase of grief
When they who go before
Go furnished: or because their span was brief,
When in the acquist of what is life's true gage,
Truth, knowledge, and that other worthiest lore,
They had fulfilled already a long age.
For doubt not but that in the worlds above
There must be other offices of love,
That other tasks and ministries there are,
Since it is promised that His servants, there
Shall serve Him still. Therefore be strong, be strong,
Ye that remain, nor fruitlessly revolve,
Darkling, the riddles which ye cannot solve,
But do the works that unto you belong.' *

Pass for a few minutes to another scene—another cathedral city in mourning to-day. It is an unusual episode in our modern Church history that on the self-same day in this Christmas week—St. John the Evangelist's day—two of our foremost men, linked by a friendship of many years, should have been laid to rest, each in his own cathedral precincts 'until the day dawn.' Absolutely at one as they were in their fundamental beliefs, united as they were in enthusiastic loyalty to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England, it would be difficult to find a greater contrast in external characteristics than is presented by the lives of the two men.

It would be inappropriate, I think, to dwell in detail here in Winchester to-day upon the elements that contributed to the genuine greatness of the life

* Archbishop Trench, 'Poems,' p. 102 (Ed. 1874).

of Frederick Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury. That it can rightly be called great is surely indisputable. And the significance of it lies partly in this—that the powers, the virtues, the strength, the courage he exhibited were of the very sort which we can, all of us, in our measure, emulate—nay, in our little way, attain. There are some forms of human greatness whereof this cannot be said. The genius of a Raphael, or a Dante, or a Handel, the intellectual prowess of a Bacon or a Pascal—those are things so wholly outside the range of the power or even the aspirations of ordinary folk that however helpful or inspiring we may find the product of their work, it is impossible, so to speak, to get into touch with the workman himself.

The very opposite is true in the case of a great man like him who has now been taken from our head. God had undoubtedly given him powers of the highest order; but his greatness after all consisted in the indomitable purpose, the lofty aim, the persistent industry, and, above all, the pure, straightforward simplicity with which he applied those powers to the furtherance of his Master's kingdom upon earth—to the setting forward among men of whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are of good report. When he was enthroned at Canterbury six years ago, taking up undaunted, at the age of seventy-five, the unenviable —in the most literal sense the 'tremendous'—burden

of the Primacy, he spoke to the people frankly of what had been the purpose of his long life. 'I have felt,' he said, 'that at any rate this was within the reach of any man who entered the ministry of the Church, that his one aim should be to make it easier for Christians to become better Christians, and to make it easier for those who were not Christians to become Christians; and that to my mind stands above every other aim that a man can have in this transitory world of ours—to help anyone to live more according to God's commandment, to help anyone to feel more truly the love of the Lord Jesus Christ, to help anyone to fight the battle with evil, most of all and first of all in himself, and then in all others. This is indeed a worthy object; this is worth more than anything that a man can put before himself to aim at.'

And if anyone supposes that the strong, brave man had set himself in his own strength to that task, or had trusted for a single day to his natural powers without a constant realization of the daily help, the personal guidance, of his Lord and Master, or, as he expressed it, 'the peculiar, the unending love of God,' let him turn to almost anything that Frederick Temple ever wrote or preached, and he will find the answer. Hear him as he speaks with plain, unadorned straightness to his Rugby boys some forty years ago:

'Our human sight is short and dim. We cannot

always look on beyond the present to God's sure purpose to give us His blessing. But all the more ought we to write it down as with a pen of iron on our own souls that whatever else we read in the life of Christ we read first of all, and above all, and through all, the assurance of the all-searching love of God. If the life be careless, bring back the mind to that; if the heart be unhappy or discontented, compel the thoughts to that; if the habits of our own daily walk cause us many a conflict between conscience and inclination, anchor the will on that. For, most certainly, it cannot fail. God's love never can, and never did, and never will.' *

Hear him again, twenty years later, as he speaks in his great Bampton lectures to the University of Oxford:

'Let a man put before his *will* the Lord's commands, the aims, the self-restraints, the aspirations that the Lord required in His disciples. Let him ponder on the call to heavenly courage, in spite of all that earth can inflict or can take away; the call to take up the cross and follow Him that was crucified; the warnings and the promises; the precepts and the prohibitions; let him think of the Leader who never flinched, of the Lawgiver who outdid His own law; let him think on the nobleness of the aims to which He pointed, of the promise of inward peace made to those who sacrificed themselves

* 'Rugby Sermons,' Second Series, p. 78.

made by our Lord, and re-echoed from the very depths of our spiritual being; let him think of the sure help promised in return for absolute trust, tried by millions of saints, and never known yet to fail. Let a man put this before his will, and if he can say with all his soul: "This is my Lord, here I recognize Him who has a right to my absolute obedience, here is the Master that I mean to serve and follow, and in spite of my own weakness and blindness, in spite of my sins, in spite of stumbling, of weariness of resolution, in spite of temptations and in spite of falls, I will not let my eyes swerve nor my purpose quit my will; through death itself I will obey my Lord, and trust to Him to carry me through whatever comes"—that man most certainly is moving in the strength of God, and the power of the Eternal Spirit lives within him.'*

My friends, I quote these words of his—taken almost at random from the records of what he used to say—to remind you of what, by his own testimony, was the source of his great strength. He had an overwhelming sense of the love of God, as revealed in the life and death of the Lord Jesus Christ, and a profound personal trust in the indwelling power of God the Holy Spirit. Again and again did he force in upon people's minds the intensity of his own trust in these great realities.

We lesser folk cannot, of course, match the power

* 'The Relations between Religion and Science,' pp. 250-251.

of his trenchant, weighty words, more potent in their rugged simplicity than any flowers of rhetoric. We lack, too, that clear, logical directness of thought which lay behind the words and inspired them. But the simple Christian truths on which he rested are, not less certainly, within the reach of every one of us for our soul's health. And the noble example he has given us of what the manly, pure, self-denying Christian life of a strong, straightforward servant of God can be and do is, or ought to be, an inspiration and a personal help to every one of us. He cared with his whole soul for the needs, the difficulties, and the impoverishments in other people's lives, and he set himself, with all the vigour of his manly strength, to help to put those wrongs and shortcomings right.

For a longer term of years than any man now alive he knew and cared and toiled for the education of the English people, and he has left it on record that what moved him to all this was his burning sense of what such ennobling of their lives and powers might and would mean for their abiding good, and, above all, for their better understanding of the message of the Saviour's love. And now, after fourscore strenuous years of life, he has gone. We have buried him in the cathedral cloister upon the festival of the aged evangelist and teacher St. John, upon whose message he loved especially to dwell. We remain—with a noble example before us for the

fulfilment of a great trust. God, who helped him, will help us too, as we strive in our degree to answer our Master's daily call to eager service and to trustful prayer.

Each of the two lives about which we have thought and spoken this morning has its direct message to ourselves. Nor do we forget to-day the stimulating and uplifting example which is still given us by that other of our teachers and guides—'a succourer of many and of myself also,' my 'true yoke-fellow,' whom, by his own special wish, we are, in his sore sickness, remembering before God in our Cathedral prayers.*

The grouping of such lives is a typical reminder of the variety and of the unity of the Christian service. Not less worthy than the strenuous public toil of the great Primate has been the devoted life, the pure and stimulating example, the deep religious earnestness, the refined and cultured thought and teaching of him who has ruled our Cathedral here for eight busy years with the spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and strength. They have parted from us here, to be united one with the other in the more immediate presence of the Lord they knew and loved. For '*this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou* (as at Christmastide) *didst send.*'

* Arthur Lyttelton, Bishop Suffragan of Southampton, was on his death-bed.

For every one of us, from the oldest to the youngest, the apostolic injunction has a special significance to-day: '*Remember them which had the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation, Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.*'

III. GEORGE AUGUSTUS SELWYN*

Ye are all one man in Christ Jesus.

GALATIANS III. 28.

WE may call this, I think, the special gospel of our own day, the special message or truth which Christian people in our own country have nowadays tried, better than people tried in former centuries, to understand and to apply. I suppose it is true to say that, speaking generally, the history of what we call civilization has been, or at least has carried with it, a passing from simpler to more complex modes of life, and part of the complexity has been the separation of classes, professions, industries, or (to use a more indefinite and most significant word) 'interests' from one another.

There are immemorial severances, racial and religious, or severances between freemen and bondmen, which were simpler and deeper perhaps than any

* St. John's College, Cambridge, February 14, 1909. At the Service held in connection with the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the College Mission in South London.

others. These, in most parts of the world, have in later generations been lessened, or, in their ruder form, removed, but only to give way to severances which have been not less real because they were less obvious or less clearly cut. Medieval chivalry even accentuated them; the Reformation, even in England, changed their shape rather than their reality, and down almost to our own day the divisions were steadily widening and deepening, imperceptibly perhaps, unintentionally perhaps, but with a piteous reality. France under the *ancien régime* in the eighteenth century, England in the earlier part of the nineteenth, were thus split into sections needlessly sundered, to the palpable detriment of each.

Then in England, in the earlier decades of Queen Victoria's reign, a change perceptibly began. If people still failed to draw together, they at least felt uncomfortable in standing apart, and it was notably here in Cambridge, though not only here, that the remedial force found shape and utterance upon definitely Christian lines. Other forces—political and social—were doubtless at work too, but the debt which we owe to Frederick Maurice and to Charles Kingsley, and to those who worked with them, is now, I think, recognized to the full. I do not dwell upon it to-day. For we are thinking principally of things which came to pass some little time later, after those pioneers and chieftains had passed into the larger workfield beyond our view. But it would

be graceless were we to forget those men and their little company, when we are thinking of what is, after all, merely the natural outcome of their labour. The green blade has sprouted where they sowed the seed. We have not yet—but, please God, we shall have some day—the full corn in the ear. When on this Sunday twenty-six years ago Allen Whitworth, the trusted friend of many here, preached in this chapel his sermon on 'The Victims of Ignorance and the Trustees of Knowledge,' he gave practical expression, after a fashion which might have been Kingsley's own, to thoughts which live and burn and sting in 'Alton Locke'—that book whose curious evolution and development, as told in its successive prefaces, concerns us so pointedly to-day. And when, just twelve months afterwards, on Sexagesima, 1884 (twenty-five years ago to-day), William Inchbold Phillips, with a devotion all his own, began, in grimy and dilapidated Walworth, the notable, original, persevering work which we who watched it will remember all our lives, he and those who sent him did a service, not to South London only or mainly, but to England, a service which has an importance out of all proportion to its size. For it awakened novel interests, and kindled into quiet glow a regulated enthusiasm, which have given coherence and character to much that has been done in South London since then. I speak that I do know and testify that I have seen when I say that

where one School and College Mission after another has twinkled into being in South London and become a little centre of light in that murky tract of monotonous streets, it is to that which came first of all, to the Lady Margaret Mission and its Missioner, that men have turned again and again for counsel and example. Your College Mission has come now to the stage common to the history of every such endeavour which survives its infantile ailments, the stage when the romance wanes, and the work takes its more prosaic place among 'accepted' facts and things. I am convinced that if at that stage we can keep the lamp alight, and with steady resolve sustain the interest and accomplish the work week after week as the year goes round, we are fulfilling in the very way which is best for England the purpose which the forerunners and pioneers of our endeavour had in view.

Things have turned out exactly as the Evangelical prophet taught us that such things can. 'They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.' To many of us the thought is familiar that there is in those words—mount up with wings, run, walk—no anticlimax. It is the true order of difficulty. It is difficult, but not so very difficult, in an hour of high and hot enthusiasm, to plan a great work, to mount up with wings of eagles, and to see its possibilities

stretching far away to the skyline. It is difficult, but not so very difficult, in the early years of a new venture, to run and not be weary, to push forward what we are eagerly keen to do, to seize and occupy with buoyant hopefulness the opportunity which God has given us. But the severest test is to follow. The real, the supreme, difficulty is 'to walk and not faint'—to plod along upon settled lines when the path has lost its initial glamour—the glamour of enterprise and of the unknown, the kind of adventurous glamour which our College Missions had, say, twenty years ago. Yes, it is difficult. But it is exactly what we have got to do, and what, please God, we mean to do. 'They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.' At the outset the very name of a College 'Mission' suggests a 'sending' men forth, with a shout of hopefulness, all the more resonant if the task seem to have something of the character of a forlorn hope, something of chivalry, nay, perhaps something almost of condescension on the part of those who thus generously 'serve.' But I ask you to consider whether this is, after all, the true aspect of what we are trying to do. St. Paul says that the secret of common service is to realize that 'ye are all one man in Christ Jesus.' It is not the thought of a band of rescuers going out to aid the helpless. It is rather the recognition of a common life; the sure and certain sense of common responsibility; the contribution of quite different elements in

the rendering of a common service. We are, all of us, 'high and low, rich and poor, one with another,' face to face with problems which none of us can easily solve—the main problem being how best to make our life's little 'spell' effective for the fulfilment of God's purpose. We shall not fulfil it aright until each section or grade of us has been loyally contributing its own quota to the common offering of 'ourselves, our souls and bodies.' Those who know our Mission work best will be the first to say that in our corporate life contributions to that common offering come quite as really and effectively from the humbler as from the loftier grades and strata in the social fabric. We, from the Universities, learn at least as much as we teach, and speedily find out that in self-denial for the common good we are often lagging far behind those generous donors whose opportunities, whose advantages, whose 'talents' (in the true sense of a misused word), are inferior to our own. 'Ye are all one man in Christ Jesus.' Grasp that fact, and the roadway becomes plainer, the cracks and schisms grow less or disappear, and 'all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love.'

'One man in Christ Jesus.' Once realize that, and the College Mission becomes a simple, natural expression of it. The unnatural, the unchristian things

are the fissures and severances which split the Christian body into sundered sections and keep it so. We know better. We know that those dividing lines have no deep-down reality. They are man-made, sometimes devil-made. We are going to secure that the unity, and not the severance, shall prevail. The College Mission or settlement is one way out of many in which to make it clear that the real law for Christian men is that 'we being many are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.'

We commemorate this year not only the twenty-fifth anniversary of the foundation of the Mission, but other events besides. It is a centenary year of extraordinary, probably of quite unique, interest. That William Ewart Gladstone, and Abraham Lincoln, and Charles Darwin, and Alfred Tennyson, and Felix Mendelssohn, should all have been born in the same year is remarkable indeed. But there are others too, and to the front among them stands your own alumnus, George Augustus Selwyn, whose service rendered to the highest good of his fellow-men is, in its own way, as great, perhaps, as that of any whom I have named.

This is not the occasion for dwelling in detail upon the fruitful work of that ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν on either side of the world, but it is impossible not to notice how strikingly the thoughts on which we have dwelt to-day are illustrated in the story of his strenuous

years. 'Ye are all one man in Christ Jesus.' He felt it, if ever Christian worker did. The quiet, prompt readiness wherewith he consented, at the Church's call, to lay down his home life of varied and stirring interest, and to take up in the then wild islands of the Southern Sea the remote pioneer enterprise which looked, and was, sixty years ago, so different from what we know and watch to-day, is of a piece with the man's whole character and make. To those who, like myself, owe personally to George Augustus Selwyn an immeasurable debt of gratitude for quiet lessons and counsels given ungrudgingly to us younger men in the golden sunset of his life, it is not easy to find his like even among the chiefs whom we have reverenced. The thought about him and his work which seems to me to fit in best with to-day's memories and lessons is the 'oneness' of it all—his quite natural and simple presentment of the message of Christ's Gospel to all sorts of different people in surroundings as widely unlike one another as it is possible to conceive—with the same confident, persistent hopefulness or quiet expectancy that it belongs to all, and that it must and will prevail. I like to recall the picture drawn for us of his planting the standard of Christ on the New Zealand shore. Those who saw him land on May 30, 1842, upon the then sequestered beach below what is now the great City of Auckland, have described the scene—a parable of many a like new start either here in England or

far away. Upon the young Bishop in the full glow of manly strength and spirit it devolved, when the outside surf had been passed and the little boat was safely beached, to take the chief hand in hauling her ashore and making all things straight. Then, falling upon his knees upon the sand, he commended to the guidance and keeping of the Lord the pioneers to whom, in Christ's name, so high a trust had been given, then the Maoris to whom they came, and then the peoples who should thereafter, as he already saw, throng the beautiful land through which he was to carry and hold aloft the banner of the Church of God. This done, he turned, we are told, 'to the work of the day,' and set himself in what one observer called 'an almost prosaic fashion' to the duties which were quickly to multiply on his hands.

To quote from his first sermon preached to an English congregation in New Zealand:

'A great change,' he said, 'has taken place in the circumstances of our natural life, but no change which need affect our spiritual being. . . . We have come to a land where not so much as a tree resembles those of our native country. All visible things are new and strange; but the things that are unseen remain the same. . . . The same Spirit guides and teaches and comforts, and watches over us. . . . The same Church of Christ acknowledges us as her members; stretches out her arms to receive and

bless our children in baptism; to lay her hands upon the heads of our youth; to break and bless the bread of the Eucharist; and lastly to lay our dead in the grave in peace.' *

It is the very thought we have been dwelling on—Cambridge, or Walworth, or New Zealand—Maori or Englishman, graduate or artisan—'Ye are all one in Christ Jesus.'

At such an hour of fresh start Selwyn did surely 'mount up with wings as an eagle' and look forth with prescience upon the coming years. But when the first enthusiasm had died down, and the dusty, plodding, daily labour had to be done, the man's characteristics were seen afresh in the very fashion we have to-day been describing. Nothing could be unimportant, nothing trivial which concerned the well-being of the community whereof he had been given the charge for the founding and up-building of the Church of Jesus Christ. So, too, as his busy life ran on. It was the same steady, persistent principle, made bright and living in the work of every day. The barriers and chasms which divide race from race, or social class from class, have, by God's help, to be broken down, and broken down for good. To him, more perhaps than to any other man, do we owe the drawing together of the Church of England and of the sister Church in the United States of America. We have in the Chapel of Lambeth Palace the silver

* See Tucker's 'Life of Bishop Selwyn,' vol. i., p. 123.

alms-dish, the gift of the American Church to that little central shrine. It is inscribed:

'Orbis veteri novus: occidens orienti: filia matri.'

And this 'pietatis testimonium,' as they called it, was despatched to its destination by the hands of George Augustus Selwyn

'Pacis et benevolentiæ internuncii, ejusdemque auctoris.'

My brothers, does all that seem far away from the thought of our College Mission and its work? It is not so. "Ye are all one man in Christ Jesus." Grasp, as I have said, that fact, and the sort of work which our Mission does will come to be obvious and natural, and even necessary to our common life. May our Father, which is in Heaven, reveal that truth, and awaken and sustain that spirit both in Cambridge and in Walworth as year follows year. May each grow to the better understanding of the other; with the common fruitfulness which such a growth and fellowship must nurture for the common good. May the workers of every kind, the richer and the poorer, older and the younger alike, go steadily 'from strength to strength, until unto the God of Gods appeareth every one of them in *Zion*.'

IV. ARCHBISHOP WHITGIFT*

One generation shall praise thy works unto another.

PSALM CXLV. 4.

THIS whole group of glad Psalms, with which the Psalter ends, has been used from the day they were written as a triumphant reminder of the continuousness—the oneness—of the Church's life—the life of God's people, first in the Old Testament, then in the New Testament, then in the long centuries which have passed since Bible days were over. There has been no break in it all. In the life of a man, from boyhood to old age, some parts may be, and certainly will be, more stirring, more eventful, than others; but each bit has to do—quite necessarily and clearly—with what went before and what comes after. So in a nation's life or a Church's life you can understand no part of it properly until you think of what that bit came out of or followed upon. God has had a purpose in moulding that life, personal or national, bit by bit, and to His all-seeing eye each little epoch,

* Croydon Parish Church. 'Founder's Day' of Whitgift Grammar School, March 22, 1906.

each set of years, is concerned with all the rest, both past and future.

We recognize that when we use this Psalm. People have always done so. It is used in the daily morning service of the synagogue. It was the psalm used at the midday meal in the early Church. Part of it is brought into the ancient 'grace' used in our colleges, and we specially sing it year by year on Whitsunday, when we are remembering the universal, the eternal, character of the kingdom of God on earth.

'One generation shall praise Thy works unto another, and declare Thy power.'

We are so using it to-day, when we think about, and pray about, and give thanks for, what happened here in Croydon 310 years ago—a thoughtful and deliberate act of piety by a great Englishman and a great Archbishop, who knew what was wanted and did it, and 'whose works'—in the fullest sense it is true to-day—'whose works do follow him.'

It was with the consciousness of God's guidance that John Whitgift made that great new start in Croydon's local life for the benefit of its older and its younger folk, and, in the words of good Thomas Fuller, every page of whose history teems with thoughts of what it all means, 'God, the best of creditors, no doubt long since hath plentifully repaid what was lent to Him in His members.'

And here to-day, in Croydon Parish Church, beside John Whitgift's tomb, we give thanks

We talk often, and truly, of the contrasts and changes which mark off one century from another, and especially perhaps the centuries of English life. But it is true, is it not, to say that these contrasts concern largely the outside surroundings and conditions of our life, and that, after all, the underlying human needs remain very much the same.

Cast your thoughts back across the three centuries that have passed since Whitgift, on March 27, 1604, was laid in that tomb, and the monument, now so lovingly restored, was set to mark his resting-place, to recall the man.

Imagine yourself back in those 'spacious times of great Elizabeth,' when John Whitgift, the very type of a scholarly pious English citizen of the best sort, used to ride down in summer evenings to escape from the stress, even then, of Lambeth life, to the quiet village of Croydon, where, as his contemporary biographer and friend writes, 'he had ever a great affection to lie, for the sweetness of the place, especially in summer-time; whereby also he might sometimes retire himself from the multiplicity of businesses and suitors.'

They were stirring days in 'England's' life. He had been five years Archbishop when the Spanish Armada, with its 149 great ships, and its 2,500 cannon, and its 28,000 men—the greatest fleet by far that the world had ever looked upon—was sighted from the Lizard sailing up the Channel on its way,

as the Spaniards expressed it, 'to overwhelm the island and to wipe out the heretics.' Then the English beacons flared out the alarm from every hill-top, and the fortnight's running fight around the British coast began. And when the North Sea storms had completed the destruction which the little English fleet began, and England was freed for ever from the peril which had loomed so large, it was to God that, under Whitgift's direction, the thanks were given and the victory ascribed. We have still the medals which were struck. One of them bears the simple legend, 'Afflavit Dominus, et dissipati sunt' (The Lord breathed, and they were scattered).

We have had great men in English history, both in Church and State, but never surely more redoubtable leaders than then.

Which of us, men or boys, but recalls with delight our first reading of 'Westward Ho!' with its breezy, buoyant, invigorating picture of what Charles Kingsley calls 'that type of English virtue, at once manful and godly, practical and enthusiastic, exhibited by the [men] whom Elizabeth, without distinction of rank or age, gathered round her' in her ever glorious reign.

You boys, to whom it may be given in after years, either here in England, or in our Colonies across the sea, to sustain untarnished the honour, the straightforwardness, the courage, the God-fearing strength which have characterized England's best men—you

will find abundant food for thought, abundant spur for action, in the story of the very years in which your great school had its birth. Those were the days when Walter Raleigh could appeal to man and God on behalf of the oppressed heathen of the New World, when, as has been well said, 'Englishmen still knew that man was man, and that the instinct of freedom was the righteous voice of God, ere the hapless seventeenth century had brutalized some of them, by bestowing on them—amid a hundred other bad legacies—the fatal gift of negro slaves.'

With all their faults—and they were many and obvious—never has there, I am well persuaded, been a truer, manlier, robuster, sounder spirit abroad among the English people than was astir in those eager years. And there are not a few respects in which the great founder whom we are recalling this morning was an embodiment and a pattern of that spirit and its power. For under all the adventurous exploits in which its heroes revelled there was a persistent forcefulness and a thoughtful, practical energy of purpose which found expression in unexpected ways.

The age was not only that of Drake and Frobisher, of Raleigh and Hawkins, but of William Shakespeare, and Francis Bacon, and our Founder's friend and counsellor Richard Hooker, and many, many other men of quiet and of cultured leadership. Elizabeth herself, at the centre, was, in her own strange way,

teaching England and the English people how to train and use new powers for good.

'Round her with all her faults' (as Bishop Creighton has said)—'round her the England which we know grew into the consciousness of its destiny. The process was difficult. The struggle was painful, and it left many scars behind. There are many things in Elizabeth which we could have wished otherwise, but she saw what England might become, and nursed it into the knowledge of its power.'

And among the friends whom she trusted because they were worthy of her trust was our own John Whitgift. When all these strifes were at their height, and the spirit of adventurous courage was carrying English sailors in their wondrous little ships across wild seas and into lands of unknown peril, and England and Spain were at death-grips here at home, John Whitgift was quietly planning the foundation, or rather the foundations, which are in our thoughts and prayers to-day. I was looking only last night at his own manuscript copy of the statutes which he drew up and signed so carefully—statutes which show a personal care for each detail in the common life of those whom he loved to call his 'true brothers and sisters,' and with whom his fellowship and friendship were so vivid and so close.

I wish we could think that the new starts and experiments and enterprises which engage us nowadays would all of them prove, when three hundred

years have come and gone, to stand as firm, and to maintain as true and sound a principle of life as Whitgift's Hospital maintains to-day. Long may it stand in the centre of Croydon's busy life, as unimpaired in its outward form as it is sound in its inner character and usefulness—a ceaseless reminder to every passer-by that across the sundering years the bonds are strong which unite us to the days of old; and that, after all, the needs which arise in our common life in the days of Queen Victoria or King Edward VII. differ less than men might think from the needs which arose and were thus met in the days of Whitgift and Elizabeth.

It is otherwise, of course, with our great School. There the change is almost incalculable. The needs of to-day are widely different from those of Whitgift's time, and the little acorn which he planted, when, with his hospital for aged and needy folk, he associated a schoolmaster 'well qualified for that function—that is to say, an honest man learned in the Greek and Latin tongues, a good versifier in both the foresaid languages, and able to write well, if possible it may be'—that acorn has grown into a mighty tree, rich in its power and opportunity for the good not of Croydon only, but of our whole English life. You boys, to whom, while life shall last, the name of Whitgift will recall the bright associations of the happiest years you can ever spend, let the lessons which spring out of that voiceful

past grow into the prayers and firm resolves which on such a day as this are yours. You bear what has been finely called 'the *perilous* inheritance of a great name.' You mean, please God, to be worthy of it.

It was in the faith and fear of God that old John Whitgift, amid the changes and chances of a stormy time, held with quiet perseverance to the work which God had given him to do, and followed steadfastly, to the utmost of his power of vision, things true, and pure, and lovely, and of good report. It was in the faith and fear of God that he inculcated on all whom he could reach the knowledge of the conquering power which comes from self-denial, self-discipline, self-forgetfulness, for the common good. His own historic motto, *Vincit qui patitur*, rings out true to-day. It is yours for use.

'One generation shall praise Thy works unto another.'

Could any phrase more exactly express what we are doing now?

If John Whitgift could awake to-day from yonder tomb, he would find a Croydon which he never dreamed of. He would find new thoughts and energies alive and eager; he would find the great lines of civil and religious liberty and tolerance and freedom for which he strove established now so firmly that our whole national life takes shape therefrom; and withal he would find in the rush, and roar, and wrestling, of our modern stream a disquiet

which is infinitely dangerous and difficult. But I do honestly believe that as a brave servant of our Master he would find the real difference of conditions to consist largely in this—that we have nowadays a far larger opportunity of service than men had in Elizabethan days.

That is God's work. That is God's message for us. Thank Him for it. 'One generation shall praise Thy works unto another and declare Thy power.'

Go forth in His Name and use these opportunities. Do that work of His as He shall show you how.

It is impossible but that in this old church to-day there must at least be here and there a boy on whom, when he has grown to bearded manhood, will be laid, in some exceptional degree, at home, or in the greater Britain beyond our shores, the privilege of standing at some crisis hour in a position in which great issues will turn upon his use or his misuse of some marked, some urgent, opportunity. My son, your power of using that crisis hour aright will turn upon the use you are making now of the quieter hours wherein, by God's grace, the force, the grit, the strength of character, can be made under His good hand to grow. Soon into the great world

> '. . . With Him Thou must fare forth,
> And He will lend thy sick soul health, thy strivings might and worth.'

'Show Thy servants Thy work, and their children Thy glory.'

V. THE CLOSE OF A CENTURY*

And so we came to Rome, and . . . when Paul saw the brethren he thanked God, and took courage. Acts xxviii. 14, 15.

Why? Was it merely the joy of a Christian teacher on finding that there were eager friends where he had perhaps scarcely expected them? Or was it the reawakening of thankfulness and the spring of hope in the mind of a man depressed by weary months of peril and travel as a prisoner by sea and land? Natural, certainly, that sort of rejoicing in such a case. But, for St. Paul, there is something more than this in the emphatic phrase; and the words suggest to us thoughts which range far beyond St. Paul.

It is a commonplace to say that if we want to realize the condition of things in some obscure period in a nation's life, or at some critical juncture in the world's history, we shall often learn as much from

* To the University of Oxford, St. Mary's Church, November 4, 1900.

chance allusions, or incidental episodes or phrases, as we shall from the large generalization of a historian or the studied utterance of a public man. Instances are familiar. Such things as an Assyrian tablet giving the details of a bargain about an orchard or a slave, or a painted coffin-lid from Thebes, or a Pompeian caricature, or a page from a monastery's discipline-roll, or the account-book of a great lady's waiting-woman—to name actual examples—have before now served to recall to life a bit of far-off past, and make it glow before our eyes. And this, not merely by adding a picturesque or homely touch, but by suggesting thoughts which can be followed out into a truer understanding of the sort of lives then lived, of their plans and hopes and ideals, and of their relation to our own days and to ourselves.

The Bible is full of such episodes, lying outside of, or alongside of, the main current of the record of a progressive revelation—scenes, or anecdotes, or casual writings—accidental if you call them so, but richly suggestive and significant of what was passing, under the Providence of God, in the growth of peoples, and of faiths, and of men: say, for example, Abraham and the children of Heth; the Book of Ruth; the so-called Song of Solomon; the Epistle to Philemon; the Third Epistle of St. John.

I suppose nearly everybody, from whatever standpoint he looks at it, would agree that the most

important of all the 'junctures'—to use the word in its literal sense—the most important of all the joining-places in the world's life is the Apostolic Age—the years, that is, when the Apostles were alive. Even the man who strangely regards as a delusion the things which people then came to believe, is ready to grant that in its consequences the adoption of that faith was of quite incalculable import in the story of the human race. I have never even heard of anyone who would dispute that. And if, setting apart the life of the Son of Man Himself, we are to fix any single hour or incident during that age as pre-eminent in its importance, it is perhaps the hour, the incident, with which the Acts of the Apostles closes—the arrival of St. Paul in Rome.

Not merely was it the consummation of his long-delayed desire, again and again expressed, but it was an hour of mighty import for the Church. Two of the foremost students and teachers of our time have called attention to its significance. 'The occupation of Rome, the capital of the world, was,' according to Bishop Lightfoot, 'the crisis which closed an epoch.' The trial for which St. Paul had come to Rome brought to a distinct issue (as Professor Ramsay has pointedly shown) the question whether or not Christianity was in itself an illegal thing within the Empire. This was now to be tested. Paul, who had always made much of his citizenship and its rights, believed, apparently without doubt, in the

legality under Imperial Law of what he had done and meant to do; and if, as is almost certain, his trial at that time resulted in his acquittal, he proved to be right.

Every scholar who has taught us about those days is at one in telling us that that was the moment, the pivot, on which what followed was to turn. It was then and there that the new start came. It was what Paul had been longing for for years. Aims, hopes, resolves were centred on it. 'I must' (he had said and written years before)—'I must see Rome.'

Paul was, to the core, a Roman citizen. He was proud of that citizenship. He had used its privilege again and again, and it was as a Roman citizen that he realized what it would mean when the citizen life of the Roman Empire—the proud franchise which was so great a force in the world—should itself become impregnated with the new principles which Christ had brought to men, and should set itself to use them. From that hour there would be a new start for the Gospel message in the world.

No words can be too strong to express Paul's idea of what the new start might mean. It was an hour, therefore, to stir his soul to its depth when he stood for the first time on the actual soil of the Imperial City, the subject of his pride, his hopes, his dreams; and there, at Tres Tabernæ, within reach of its walls, found himself face to face with those upon the spot,

to whom already the message of the Cross was the mainspring of a new and higher life. 'When he saw the brethren' (saw them there and felt what it meant), 'he thanked God and took courage.'

It is impossible nowadays, I imagine, for any man quite to realize how startling, how overpowering, in its absolute novelty, was the Apostle's vision as it returned to him again and again, the vision of the new possibilities, the new life for the 'world'—*for the world*, be it noted, with quite a new significance in the phrase. It was by degrees only that he had come to grasp in its fulness what it meant—nothing less than the breakdown of barriers, limits, restrictions, which he had from childhood onwards been taught to regard reverently as of God's own making, and the declaration of a levelling message of universal love unlike any that any nation had as yet dreamed of. A new start, indeed, as far-reaching as it was deliberate.

Some thinking people still find it doubtful, or more than doubtful, whether the whole world will ever be absorbed by or conquered by Christianity. Well, it is at least quite certain that Christ meant and said that it some day should be, and that Paul distinctly looked forward to its happening. If to some of us (and I do not doubt that there are some) that consummation seems to be simply out of the question, remember that there was a time when great thinkers, some of the greatest that have lived

on earth, regarded what now seems to us almost a commonplace—the theory of the brotherhood of man as man—as being utterly irrational, almost unthinkable, and certainly contrary to all such design as could be attributed to Nature. Not so many years before Paul the prisoner walked with the chain upon his wrist along the Appian Way into the gates of Rome, the greatest of her orators, one of the foremost, I suppose, of her thinkers, had described in stately periods the physical facts and conditions—permanent, he deemed them—of the distribution of human life upon the earth.

Cicero supposes himself to be standing in the heavens, and 'From the Milky Way' (I quote from an eloquent summary of the passage*)—'from the Milky Way he marks in vision the few, the narrow, and the scattered "patches" of the earth which were habitable; the waste, impassable tracts which severed—absolutely and finally severed—the races of mankind; the invincible impossibility of serviceable communications. It is from these laws and certainties of nature that he draws the lofty, melancholy moral of the worthless narrowness of human frame. "The Southern Zone," he says, "bears absolutely no relation to the condition of Europe. Even Europe has very little interest in the eyes of the humane world of Italy." This was the judgment of a mind

* See Archbishop Benson's sermon to the Lambeth Conference of 1888 (S.P.C.K. volume, p. 229).

open to all the considerations which had hitherto suggested themselves in thought and literature. Yet a few years later a society was summoned into existence whose earlier call was to be "Fishers of Men," to gather together in one "the children of God who were scattered abroad." Cicero expressly affirms it to be "unimaginable that even the mightiest name from lands of civilization and culture should pass the eternal barriers of Caucasus, or be wafted over Ganges." A few years later the Apostle was writing of "One Name in which every knee would bow."'

It was, in the largest sense, then, a 'new departure' upon earth. And St. Paul's vision of what it all should mean outdid and overleaped what other men were, even later on, to see. For most people the vision has tarried, and not perhaps till now have Christian people ever fairly and calmly looked upon the world's life, and thought out what it might mean if the vision all came true. Not until now.

Is there, one wonders, any real significance in the curious fact (for curious at least it is, if it be nothing more) that in the history of Europe men's practical ideas about the enlargement of the corporate life of Christendom have so often come to the birth just when one century is passing into another? Is this accidental, or do men, do peoples, at such great milestone epochs, look with quickened eyes upon what we call the march of time? Do they instinctively take stock of the world and its occupants as they are, and

revise and reset their ideas of what Christian Empire means and implies? Such a thought, such a process, is not unnatural at those suggestive century dates; and if it be true that men, that Christians, are apt so to think and plan, it is at least certain that in the Providence of God they have again and again had special opportunity at these centennial points for bracing themselves to a new start, bracing themselves to the realization of a mightier responsibility, the fulfilment of a larger hope. Take a few examples of this: examples which will be easily remembered. We are accustomed to say that modern history began with the coronation of Charlemagne. It was in a centennial year that, on Christmas Day, 800, in the old basilica of St. Peter's at Rome, the Pope 'rose and placed upon the brow of the barbarian chieftain the diadem of the Cæsars,' and that thus 'was consummated the union—so mighty in its consequences—of the Roman and the Teuton, of the memories and civilization of the South with the fresh energy of the North. From that moment modern history begins.'*

Exactly two centuries on, and again a new start; or at least the ideal and the vision of it. In that thousandth year of the Christian era, when, in expectation of the Lord's coming to judgment, men crowded to Jerusalem to be witnesses of the great assize in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, the young Emperor Otto

* See Bryce's 'Holy Roman Empire,' p. 54.

resolved to make Rome again the capital of a holy, world-wide Empire—to give, in short, a new start to Christendom.

Another hundred years, and in the fall of Jerusalem before the armies of the First Crusade on July 15, 1099, men saw, as they thought, a new epoch dawning for Christendom, and, through Christendom, for the world.

Recall for a moment the splendid, the unrivalled, ideals and enterprise with which Innocent III. marked the last year of the twelfth century and the first year of the thirteenth.

Remember the absolute frenzy of religious zeal which stirred Europe to its depths in the year 1300, for what was called the Jubilee of Christendom—the pilgrimage to the Apostolic tombs in Rome—the year which has been called the zenith of the Roman Pontificate.

Try to picture what it meant to the man of high Christian ideals when, as the fifteenth century closed and the sixteenth was born, the news spread through Europe of a new world beyond the Western sea, and the Middle Ages were ended and the modern period began.

And then consider how, to look no farther than our English race and its doings, the centennial years since then have been successively marked by new beginnings for the Christian Empire and for Christian enterprise beyond the sea.

It was on December 31, 1600, the very day on which the century ended, that the East India Company was constituted, and our direct responsibility for India began.*

It was in the last year of the seventeenth century and the first year of the eighteenth that the charters uniting the East India Companies were granted, and Sir Alfred Lyall has described how, by that step, enterprise, capital, and experience were concentrated upon the consolidation of our position—our responsible position—in South Asia.† In that year the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel was founded.

It was in January, 1800—the same year as that in which the Church Missionary Society began its work —that 'the Imperial note was for the [illegible] time sounded,' and the words now so familiar were formally used for the first time, when the army in Mysore received from the British Parliament the thanks of the nation for 'establishing on a basis of permanent security the tranquillity and prosperity of the British Empire in India.'

Now, you may call all these facts accidental, the coincidences fanciful, or you may use—I do use—a different term. The facts remain: and their significance.

And now, now we again stand face to face with our

* See Mill, 'History of British India,' book i., chap. i., p. 23.

† See 'The British Dominion in India,' p. 57.

contemporary facts at the junction of two centuries. I do not ask you to go over again, even in barest outline, the tale with which in the last few weeks we have grown even tiresomely familiar—the achievements of the century that is over. We look back, I will simply say, along the busiest hundred years that mankind has seen ('busiest' certainly, and I think we might use far nobler epithets), and we look forward into what? Into a period, I suppose, unquestionably of new and clearer understanding of what we call scientific facts; of new and more effective subjugation of Nature's forces to man's daily use; of new and more penetrating insight into the sources of disease; of new and more general knowledge how to fight it. It would be easy to prolong the list. Do I go too far in saying that those who are best qualified to judge agree in the belief that we are standing probably on the very verge of discoveries (remember that the word means the unveiling of things already there) as big in their results for mankind as those, say, of telegraphy, or anæsthetics, or photography?

If so, if we are thus upon the threshold of some new insight, it is more than possible—I had almost said it is quite likely—that to some man now arming himself at Oxford for the task it will be given to fashion the key for the expectant lock, and to fling open the new gateway for the good of all. But as we peer wistfully into the haze that hangs ahead,

it is not of science only that we think—science technically and narrowly so called. There are greater things than these—a truer Epiphany for men than mere science can declare. What of the 'character' of nations and of men? Is there any symptom of a new start there? Is there any tightening of our grip upon the deeper realities of life? any closer intertwining of our thoughts on those matters with the thoughts and plans and resolves of every day? To me it seems every year more certain that there is, but I know it can be questioned, and I pass that by, and ask you to see this at least: that once again, as an old century dies and a new one is born, there is a steadier and a more eager outlook into the great world round us, and a keener caring about the needs which are not all under our very eyes. Putting into terms of our own day the sort of notion which did sometimes, in strange, fantastic, superstitious ways, mark centennial periods long ago, we have to-day a clearer sense of some solid, practical reality underlying what used to be mere sentimental phrases about the brotherhood of man.

We, in England, have been led thitherward, of late, along many different paths—paths of peace and of war, of politics, of commerce, of literature, of research. No people on earth has ever had an experience akin to what our own, in these closing decades of the century, has been. No people, I am convinced, has ever had so magnificent an oppor-

tunity as that which, in the twentieth century, lies before ourselves and our children.

It would here, surely, be the flimsiest and most needless commonplace to remind you in detail of the absolutely new ideas which have been brought home to the English people at large (within the experience of us all) by the object lessons of our Jubilee gatherings and the more telling object lessons of our wars, and of our great national bereavement. The ideals of Charlemagne, of Innocent, of Columbus, or the more definite visions of our own first pioneers and founders in India, in America, and in the islands of the sea, pale into insignificance before the visions which are confronting us at our centennial epoch now. We look outward and we look onward, and, for the first time in our history, the man who dreams such dreams finds that a vast number of people loyal to our Lord Christ and His society on earth—people whose fibre has been sternly tested since this time two years ago—are fashioning such dreams into firm and quiet resolve.

The dawn of the new century a few weeks hence will break upon a people better fitted than they have ever been yet for the definite 'calling' which is ours.

Contrast the view of even the best average men a century ago about our duties, our answerableness, in Asia or Africa, with what people think and say about it now.

Recall the sort of answers made in Parliament by

some of our leading statesmen to what they deemed the sentimental enthusiasms of Edmund Burke or William Wilberforce. Or come within the range of a nearer experience. Look back only a quarter of a century. It was in 1873 that Professor Max Müller, the brilliant and versatile scholar, by whose death, a few days since,* the whole world of letters is so much the poorer, delivered in the nave of Westminster Abbey a memorable address on Foreign Missions, and specially on the debt which England owes to India. If anyone will take the trouble to contrast the contemporary comments upon that address—which attracted general notice and drew wide attention to the whole subject—with the sort of comment which is current, the sort of interest which is awakened, in regard to the same subject now, he, too, if he cares at all about the matter, will 'thank God and take courage.'

I speak that I do know and testify that I have seen. It falls to a Bishop's lot to test these things on many platforms, as in a year like this he stands face to face in one great town after another with those to whom he is asked to speak, and can thus, more easily than other men, feel the new throb of the people's pulse, or watch the gathering volume of the stream. Or look across the sea. Who that remembers what used to be connoted by 'Botany Bay,' but is contrasting these recollections now with

* He died on October 28, 1900.

the invigorating story of what this last year has seen in the birth of a confederated nation throbbing with plans and hopes and possibilities, incalculably brave and strong. And if any man is inclined, as some doubtless are, to belittle the religious side of that 'joy because a man is born into the world' — the world of nations—let him note what happened some five months ago, when the huge Town Hall of Sydney was filled from end to end on the evenings of five successive days, with an audience mainly of men, gathered to encourage with enthusiastic cheers the missionary work of their own Australian Church in Melanesia, and New Guinea, and elsewhere.

This is no trifling or accidental or unmeaning thing at a moment when, with a new century, new plans and modes of missionary work, or, if you prefer the word, of *civilizing* work, larger and more intelligent in scope, are being brought to bear from English Christendom upon the world outside.

Is it without significance that Sir Robert Hart, in calmly estimating the various possibilities as to the future of poor distracted China, with its battles of confused noise and its garments rolled in blood (Sir Robert Hart, who knows China better than any living European), should place second only among the contingencies he thinks possible the sudden spread of Christianity throughout its countless millions, the blood of the martyrs becoming once again the seed of the Church.

Friends, these truly are times in which it is worth while to be living, worth while to be set to teach and learn at a centre like Oxford, where prayers and plans and resolves are being shaped now by the younger men and women whose manhood and womanhood in the twentieth century shall see these prayers answered, these resolves bearing fruit; worth while, even, to have endured a war so heavy in its tax upon the life-blood of our bravest men, a lengthening bede-roll now, to which has been added this week the name of that manly, straightforward, simple young Oxonian, the grandson of the Queen.*

Yes, it is all worth while, for it has made us, at the very moment when a new start is most significant, set ourselves to see to it that with our new ideals abroad and our new Parliament at home, the thing shall, by the help of God, be righteously and hopefully taken in hand. That can come true. Please God it will. If so, it must be because our prayers are not weaker, our ideals not narrower, our resolves not baser, than were St. Paul's. And why should they be? St. Paul found inspiration for thankfulness and hope in the very thought of how the Roman Empire, in whose citizenship he gloried, might, with all its glaring faults, be used by God for the spreading of Christ's victorious message, and so for the bettering of the world. And if in that thought he

* H.H. Prince Christian Victor of Schleswig-Holstein died at Pretoria, October 29, 1900.

found thankfulness and courage as he passed, a chained prisoner, through the gateway into Rome, what may our courage, our hopefulness, our expectancy be—nay, what may it not be?—as we look outward and onward now into the coming years for our country, for our Empire, and, through that Empire rightly handled, for the world! There is nothing nobler, nothing more inspiring, it is often said, than greyheaded hopefulness—the power of giving thanks, not for the past only, but for the future. The coming years shall, please God, if an endeavour be worth anything, be brighter, nobler, more unselfish, than ours hitherto have been.

We may not—fully we shall not—see the issue, but we can each one of us do what in us lies to make the new start real.

'What matter, I or they?
Mine or another's day,
So the right word be said,
And life the sweeter made?

'Hail to the coming singers!
Hail to the brave life-bringers!
Forward I reach, and share
All that they sing and dare.

* * * * *

'I feel the earth move sunward,
I join the great march onward,
And take by faith, while living,
My freehold of thanksgiving.'*

* From 'My Triumph,' by Whittier, 'Poems,' p. 352.

VI. THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR*

Thy kingdom come.

ST. MATTHEW VI. 10.

THE grandest perhaps of the petitions taught us by our Lord. Always remember that it is from our Father that we ask this thing. It is His kingdom, our Father's kingdom, that we want to 'come.' We are His children, so it is *our* concern, too. It is as sons, princes, that we ask for the 'coming' here on earth of the kingdom we are to share—the kingdom of God, the rule of right, the prevalence and spread of what was taught by, laid down by, set on foot by, the Prince of peace—Who came just in order that we might better understand the purpose of His Father and our Father, Whose 'coming' into the world was heralded by the heavenly proclamation of the 'peace' and the 'goodwill' He was to bring to a world that sorely needed them.

Did it come true? Did He bring these things?—plant them, root them firmly among people, among

* Winchester Cathedral, special service of Intercession in connection with the war, February 11, 1900.

peoples? Does it look like it? Does it feel like it this winter here in England, or in Christendom—'Christendom,' remember, at large?

> 'Beneath that angel-strain have rolled
> Two thousand years of wrong.'

Why, our special thought and purpose to-day is anxious intercession in connection with a terrific war! The hoarse cruel blare of it is forced into every home, and in this great congregation there is, I suppose, scarcely one—perhaps there is not one—whose lips do not frame a personal individual prayer in our intercession service to-day, in whose heart there is not uprising at this moment the thought of some special life six thousand miles away for whom a separate petition goes up to God.

Does it look like it? does it feel like it? as we daily read or listen to the angry disputations about 'whose fault it is,' or as we turn thence in reverent sympathy to the bereavement of some darkened home? At such an hour this prayer, 'Thy kingdom come,' or the very suggestion of it, may sound perhaps to some the hollowest mockery—mere

> 'Vacant chaff well-meant for grain.'

And yet I venture to say deliberately that unless we can from the heart offer this very prayer, 'Thy kingdom come,' in special relation to what is now going on, we have missed half the meaning and most of the fruitfulness of a service such as ours to-day.

There are some people who find it strangely difficult —nay, there are probably some who think it actually profane—to look upon the facts of modern history—the politics and speeches and leaderships, the strifes and the treaties of modern nations—as having the sacredness which belonged to the like things in what we call 'Bible Times,' and it is of course true that there are great events in the world's life recorded in Holy Scripture—including the one great event of all—which do stand by themselves, apart from the usual stream of human history.

But by what right do we lower the sacredness, the grandeur, of what happens in the modern world by setting it thus upon a lower level than the like incidents of war or peace, of policy or statesmanship, in the days, say, of David, or Isaiah, or Herod? The Lord Who knows and cares, and Who guides the world's life, has as much to do with it now as in times of old. The difference lies in this, that the inspired chronicler of ancient days saw, where we fail to see it, the hand of God, and drew, where we often fail to draw, the true lessons God would teach us.

'God is not dumb, that He should speak no more;
If thou hast wanderings in the wilderness
And find'st not Sinai, 'tis thy soul is poor;
There towers the Mountain of the Voice no less,
Which whoso seeks shall find, but he who bends,
Intent on manna still and mortal ends,
Sees it not, neither hears its thundered lore.'*

* J. R. Lowell, 'Bibliolatres,' Poems, p. 112.

'The Lord sitteth above the water-floods. The Lord remaineth a King for ever.' 'Thy kingdom come.'

Now, if there be one lesson more than another which the Bible history teaches us, from the days of Abraham to the close, it is that to a nation or a community may be given a sacred trust; that God can and will help them—in spite of frequent failure and short-coming—to fulfil it; that that helpful training comes through varied discipline; and that it is a right thing to ask Him to make that training abundantly fruitful of good. That truth is inwrought in Bible history. 'The Kingdom of Heaven,' 'the Kingdom of God,' 'the Kingdom of Christ'—these phrases express, as has been well said, what is offered in Scripture from the first page to the last as the end of the Divine education of the world. The thought of the kingdom and its trust was the moral of the Old Testament, the issue to which all the training of God's chosen people tended. By bondage and wandering, by conquest and oppression, by brilliant triumphs, by heroic suffering, by desolate exile, by painful return, the Jews were taught the Divine lesson. Step by step the full majesty of that magnificent ideal, their incomparable trust, was realized. At last, in the fulness of time, the 'Kingdom of Heaven' in its yet greater significance was revealed. Christ reigned. Christ reigns from the Cross, and it has been the business of his followers — ah!

how miserably they have fallen short in its discharge!—to make that ideal live—'Thy kingdom come.'

Turn now from Israel to England, from Bible times to our own. I do not for a moment suggest that we can compare the position which England in the Providence of God holds now in the world with the position held of old by God's chosen people, or that our heritage is of a sort to set us thus apart from men of other lands. It is such notions as that—whether they take a sacred or a secular form—which have often been our snare, our bane. To other peoples in Christendom, as to ourselves, have distinctive privileges or trust been given. It is for them to use rightly, as in the sight of God, the gifts with which He has dowered them. It is ours to use our own. We shall not do it duly unless our thoughts take shape in prayer. We want such prayer to be very real to-day. At an eventful juncture in our history, the men and women of England are gathered this morning in every church, the land through, with resolute and reverent resolve to lay before God our national life as it is—for pardon, for strengthening, for guidance. We have foremost in our hearts the special needs and perils of those now in the field so many thousand miles away. Together we ask of God for them, in health or sickness, in life or death, the gifts which He alone can give, according to each separate need. And from them we turn

to those whom each one of them has dearest to him at home, and as we thank God for the unswerving spirit of sacrifice which has so nobly inspired mother and wife and father to send forth ungrudgingly him who is their very heart's blood, we bring the ache and strain of anxious waiting, or it may be the numb, blank desolation of sorrow, to the God of all comfort and consolation, and we try to leave it calmly there.

But, further, we look beyond and behind these personal and local things; we take stock of our nation in its largest sense, and we bring that to God to-day.

'There are times,' it has been said, 'when a nation becomes for a while vividly conscious of its corporate life. These times are not the dangerous hours of wealth, but the more blessed, because the more uniting, moments of common anxiety and trouble.' Then it is that a silence is made in which you almost hear the pulsings of that mighty heart; then the great and small alike forget their miserable individuality, and rise to remember that they are parts of a whole.

It has happened to many of us, I suppose, to watch occasionally the effect produced upon the life of an honest man (a man, say, of no extraordinary or sensational powers) by his being unexpectedly called to some responsible and anxious task. We have seen two things follow. On the one hand, the

call 'brings out' or 'brings in' (we may put it either way) fresh powers. It equips him with a resolute hopefulness and a new courage. The man is stronger than he knew. And on the other hand, at such an hour, he sees better than before his own limitations. He becomes suddenly conscious of high opportunities which he has misused or let slip, of past faults and failures which now hamper him. With all his courage and hopefulness he is humbled too, and the humbling is itself very fruitful of good. He feels—now the critical hour has come—how much more he might have done if only he were a better man.

It is a parable for a nation's life. For years the nation may have gone easily, casually, upon its way. There has been no intention to act otherwise than rightly, but vigilance has been relaxed. Selfishness has had free play, and the need of a stern self-discipline has been slighted or forgotten. Then, all unlooked for, the critical hour comes. On the one hand, these faults and failures bear their inevitable fruit. On the other hand, the call of duty and of difficulty evokes all that is best in the fibres of the nation's life, and she finds herself stronger, calmer, braver, more resolute, than she knew. That, surely, is the hour for bringing it all to God, that He may forgive and mend what is amiss; that He may strengthen and stimulate and guide the quiet resolve that we will in good sooth be faithful to our trust, that we will

loyally recognize the kingship and the guidance of our Lord, that we will do our part on earth towards making His kingdom come. Few will dare to say that in England now we are doing that as strenuously as we ought. Yet we should be thankless, indeed, if we did not recognize to-day what this time of discipline is teaching, is evoking, in English life. I have heard it said within the last few days that the spirit stalking abroad in England is an unchristian spirit of pride and anger and revenge. To my eyes it seems quite otherwise. That there are noisy voices and envenomed pens which give expression to such a spirit is too true. But who that has had large opportunity of observing the really prevalent tone and temper but has marvelled—almost awestruck—at the deepened sense of the worth and beauty of life's true issues—the strength of self-sacrifice and the uniting power of a common anxiety, a common sympathy, a common hope. We have got below the surface, and the upturning of the deeper soil must result—come what may—in good. People are facing our common responsibilities as they never faced them before. They are realizing, in a vague, uncertain way perhaps, but truly, what the trust committed to us means.

What we want to help forward by our prayers to-day is the better understanding of that sacred heritage. We are only feeling our way towards knowing its significance. But we are feeling our

way. Remember always that our heritage of trust and opportunity is one to which the world, in all its history, can show no parallel whatever. Bit by bit the British Empire has grown to what it is, grown till it almost literally circles the globe, and grown, not by the rude prowess of a conqueror's sword, but almost wholly by the spread of commerce and civilization whereof we have been the messengers, and which it has been our highest privilege to foster and maintain, not solely, sometimes not chiefly, for England's good, but for the world's.

With innumerable failures and abundant mistakes we have yet, as a people, upheld in the main that sacred trust. Let India and its Government, an absolutely unique thing in the world's life, be our witness. But we have needed in these latter days a reminder, sharp and stern, of what that trust involves. Such a heritage calls ever and anon, as the generations pass, for a large self-sacrifice, and we must pay the price. It will call—harder lesson far—for a self-discipline on the nation's part which shall trample sternly under foot any mere greed for gain, any mere selfish aggrandizement, any violation of the principles of liberty and of equal rights for all. In the intercession that we make unto God to-day, let the prayer for that gift of self-restraint be genuine and clear. It is of the very essence of our solemn trust; of the very essence of

our membership in the Kingdom of God. 'Thy kingdom come.'

> 'Tis not the grapes of Canaan that repay,
> But the high faith that failed not by the way.'

Sometimes we are called upon to pray about things for which in our hearts we do not greatly care. It is far otherwise to-day. Every noblest impulse, every highest ideal, every tenderest sympathy with the anxious and the sad, is being stirred to its depth. For weeks we have read and talked and thought of little else but the very matter which is to-day to be fashioned into prayers as earnest, as far-reaching, as any we have ever offered in our lives.

'Remember not, Lord, our offences, nor the offences of our forefathers.

'From all blindness of heart,

'*Good Lord, deliver us.*'

'For those who are gone forth to fight, from home and from our colonies,

'For those who suffer—the dying, the wounded, the sick, the mourners for the fallen,

'*Hear us, good Lord.*'

We look back, and we humbly ask His pardon for whatsoever has been amiss, for whatsoever has been selfish or callous or uncharitable or untrue in the long story—generations long—which has led us to where we stand to-day.

And we look forth, forth across the sea to where

on veldt and kopje, in face of difficulties which might daunt the stoutest heart, men we know and love—men most of whom have never had to face a foe before—are maintaining, with a personal courage so indomitable as to extort the somewhat reluctant admiration of the world, the highest traditions of English manliness and courage. They know that we bear them on our hearts before God to-day, that we commit them body and soul to His keeping, that amid all our duties they are never many minutes absent from the thoughts of any of us, and that those to whom it is given to 'love not their lives unto the death' have an imperishable place in the story of our people's life.

> 'Ah! when the fight is done,
> Dear land, whom triflers now make bold to scorn,
> How nobler shall the sun
> Flame in thy sky, how braver breathe thy air
> That thou bred'st children who for thee could dare,
> And die as thine have done.'

And we look forward, forward to the day—God grant it may come speedily now—when the hideous warfare now darkening that fair land shall be over, and we ask our Father in heaven so to guide and govern the minds of those on whom must rest the deep and anxious responsibility of settlement, that no thought may find a place save what will best serve to establish righteousness and lasting peace, the assurance of Christian liberty, and the

growth of such mutual tolerance and mutual respect as shall ripen into Christian love.

Be such our thoughts of past and present and future as we join again in the Lord's own prayer, 'Thy kingdom come!'

VII. THE EARTHQUAKE IN ITALY*

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

GENESIS I. 1.

THESE are not only the opening words of the Bible, they are far more than that. Properly understood, they strike a keynote which rings right on through the whole sacred literature which we call 'the Bible,' both Old Testament and New. The words reveal or unveil something which people either had not known before, or else had realized so dimly that their full lesson had nowhere been learned aright. To understand them and what they teach we ought to consider for a moment or two how and when they came to be written, or spoken, or laid down as true.

It is far from my intention to discuss this morning the way in which the book Genesis, as we have it now, took shape, or what are the sources of its different parts. When we speak of Genesis and the

* Canterbury Cathedral, January 17, 1909.

books which follow as the 'books of Moses' we are using a popular term, which we must take care not to press too hard. I suppose there are very few people—or very few people whose opinion on such subjects is valuable—who would now insist that what we call the Pentateuch was simply written (to use a colloquial phrase) 'straight away' by Moses, by the sole help of what God had directly taught him or what he had seen himself. Everybody, or almost everybody, who has studied the matter agrees in saying that these books, and especially the book Genesis, are 'composite,' or derived from many sources, and it is not only legitimate, but most useful and right, that men competent to do it should try, by patient study and by comparison with other ancient literature and language, and especially by the reverent study of the Bible itself in all its parts, to find out with greater or less certainty (and at present the certainty is in some cases very small indeed) what are or were the original materials which could be used, and were used, under the good hand of God, and by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, as helps towards the construction of these books as we know them now. Even guesses and conjectures have often, in such study, proved to be exceedingly useful, as suggesting points or directions for inquiry, provided always that conjectures be not mistaken for final judgments, or probabilities for statements of fact. At what date the books took the

exact shape we are now familiar with nobody knows for certain, and I am not trying to add anything to-day to that wonderfully interesting inquiry.

But this does seem to me to be beyond doubt or question. If the Bible history as a whole is to stand together, or, as we say, 'hang' together, consecutively and intelligibly as a connected narrative of the life of a people in its relation to God (and that, I take it, is the belief of all of us), then the teaching which these earlier books contain must—speaking of it as a whole—take its proper place at the beginning.

When the story, the consecutive story, of Israel's life as a people starts, it must start, if it is to be intelligible at all, on the basis which the Bible gives us—the nation, in its childhood as a nation, being taught, as Genesis teaches, not the full history of the peoples of the earth, not the full science of the growth and character of life, either vegetable or animal, not the scientific or mathematical relation of the planet which we inhabit and call the earth, to the rest of the universe—none of these things; but something larger, more fundamental than them all—the relation of the living God to the world we live in, and, above all, to man. When the disciplined growth of the nation's life began—the discipline of Egyptian bondage, of acquiring freedom, of learning to use corporate life, of learning obedience to moral law, of looking for the fulfilment of a Divinely-taught hope (a

'promised land'), of the need of loyalty to an unseen Lord and Guide—all this—the very thing which we speak of as the message of God through Moses—must have as its basis and its background the belief in the reality of 'God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.'

We know a great deal more now than our fathers knew about the history, the traditions, and the beliefs of the great nations who lie at the dawn, or behind the dawn, of existing history, Assyrian, Babylonian, Accadian, Egyptian, and the rest. And the more we learn from Assyrian tablet or Egyptian tomb, or from Mediterranean mounds and sepulchres less easily found than these, the clearer does the difference grow between them on the one hand, and (on the other) the dawn of Israel's Divinely-guided life. We see the controlling operation of the Spirit of God which taught the Hebrew writers how to use the materials which came to their hands, to take, as has been said by one of our most capable and thoughtful teachers—'to take the primitive conditions of the human race, to purify them from their grossness and their polytheism, and to make them at once the foundation and the explanation of the long history that is to follow.'*

And so the Bible opens with the solemn words: 'In the beginning GOD created the heaven and the earth.'

The point is, not that the thing happened, but that

* Kirkpatrick's 'Divine Library of the Old Testament,' p. 97.

God did it. And we—we, like those of the dawning time—fall back quietly upon that as something that explains, something that lasts, something that supports. He is the Creator. Yes; but He is the faithful Creator too; and, as St. Peter says, we can therefore 'commit the keeping of our souls to Him.' *

Brothers and sisters, I think you will have already seen the bearing of this upon the thoughts which are awake in us to-day—thoughts of eager sympathy with our suffering brothers and sisters in Italy.

I remember some twenty years ago Mr. Gladstone being asked in conversation, 'What, in natural beauty, is the most striking thing you ever saw?' He replied at once: 'A sunrise over the Straits of Messina.'

Less than three weeks ago, when the sun rose over the Straits of Messina on the morning of Holy Innocents' Day, its light revealed the greatest catastrophe, as regards the loss of human life which the world—so far as we know—has ever seen. About five o'clock that morning, in a space, it is said, of not more than forty seconds, two hundred thousand people were crushed to death, or buried alive under fallen buildings, or engulfed by a colossal wave.

Is the bigness of this contemporary fact realized yet by most of us? I think not. Two hundred thousand lives—men, women, and children—ended in less than a minute, so far as this world's work and responsibility go, and countless thousands more

* 1 Pet. iv. 19.

wounded, or maimed, or bereft of reason by the horrors of that dawn.

No question here of human wrong-doing, or human war and strife, or even human carelessness. It was simply what in the old legal phraseology we call 'the act of God.'

Now is that, we ask ourselves, a true phrase?

'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.'

'And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.'

Do those phrases, in face of such a story, sound unreal? Do they jar upon the ear? Ought they to jar? It is a wholesome question for any thoughtful man. How often it must have recurred in the popular mind as the generations have passed. For this appalling catastrophe—unique in its magnitude—is, of course, very far from unique in its nature. There have probably been no centuries in the world's story without such happenings. The scenes in Lisbon one hundred and fifty years ago, in Naples fifty years ago, in San Francisco and in Jamaica within the memory of us all, are but examples on a great scale of what have in some parts of the world been happening again and again, and always with the same suddenness, and the same overwhelming, benumbing sense of the utter helplessness of man. Our Lord Himself has told us that it should be so, and some of the grandest of the Church's litanies were, in their

earliest inception and use, the voice of stricken peoples, in days of earthquake, speaking to their God.

The very region—a region of exuberant beauty and of golden sunshine, where tens of thousands are now bereaved or dead, has known such things, not once or twice before. The selfsame cities and villages and hillsides were thus smitten one hundred and twenty years ago with appalling devastation. The terror and pathos of the scenes then witnessed at Messina (in 1783) served, as the facts came slowly—after the manner of those days—to be known in England, to give an unwonted subject to one of the most devout of English poets, the gentle Evangelical, William Cowper. It is worth while to quote some of his characteristic lines, and to notice his unhesitating ascription of the calamity to God's righteous judgment upon human wrongdoing and unbelief. The mystery of the problem seems hardly even to perplex him.

'Alas for Sicily! rude fragments now
Lie scattered where the shapely column stood.
Her palaces are dust. . . .
. . . . . .
While God performs upon the trembling stage
Of His own works His dreadful part alone.
. . . . . .
His wrath is busy and His frown is felt.
. . . . . .
. . . Immense
The tumult and the overthrow, the pangs
And agonies of human and of brute
Multitudes, fugitive on every side.
. . . . . .

Ocean has caught the frenzy, and upwrought
Not by a mighty wind, but by that voice
Which winds and waves obey, invades the shore.
. . . . .
Such evil sin hath wrought; and such a flame
Kindled in heaven, that it burns down to earth,
And in the furious inquest that it makes
On God's behalf, lays waste His fairest works.
. . . . .
What then—were *they* the wicked above all,
And *we* the righteous, whose fast-anchor'd isle
Moved not, while theirs was rock'd like a light skiff?
. . . No: none are clear,
And none than we more guilty. But where all
Stand chargeable . . . God may choose His mark.
. . . . .
Tremble and be amazed at thine escape,
Far guiltier England! lest He spare not thee.'*

A hundred years have wrought a change, I think, in the view that devout men may take of problems such as these, and it is surely a not less reverent thought which bids us simply bow the head in the presence of so bewildering an event. 'God is in heaven and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few.'†

But when we turn from the problem, unsolved and by us insoluble at present, *why* such a disaster can come about in the realm of Him Who doeth all things well—in the handiwork of the Faithful Creator—when we turn from that to the lessons which we can learn from a solemn event which so truly concerns the whole brotherhood of nations, we are

* 'The Task,' part ii. † Eccles. v. 2.

no longer left to the mere silent bowing of the head in presence of the mysterious cloud. Rather there is a message which rings out clear—is it not this?—the need and the possibility of some worthier grasp of the right proportion of things. 'In the beginning GOD created the heaven and the earth.' We want some vision of what He, our Lord, would have us feel about the largeness of the life the Creator gives us to spend here and hereafter for Him, the enduring nature of the trust which surely, surely cannot thus have been ended once for all in a little moment for two hundred thousand of His children. The eye ranges perforce beyond the little stitches of the pattern to its large design, and though the little stitch which each of us can add to it here in the steady and steadying performance of our daily duty shows clear in its colour and strength, the larger vision is forced upon our view, and we begin to feel that we may some day, somewhere in His realm, be able to give a new interpretation to what we call 'disaster' now. Remember how St. John, in his little circumscribed Isle of Patmos, engaged in the round of each day's thought and work, heard suddenly a larger sound, 'the voice as it were of a trumpet,' and the vision of the greater life, here and hereafter, flashed in upon him for a time. Is *this* not 'the voice as it were of a trumpet,' bringing a reminder to us that this life is not all, that in the Creator's realm there are things larger than we ordinarily see? It is hard, hard

beyond words, to rise to that larger vision, for our eyes are fixed so steadily (so necessarily too) upon what is small. Some here may possibly remember a striking passage in which a great philosopher, the famous Bishop Berkeley, described nearly two hundred years ago the thought which occurred to him of the inscrutable schemes of Providence as he watched in St. Paul's Cathedral a little fly crawling on one of the pillars.

'It required,' he says, 'some comprehension in the eye of the spectator to take in at one view the various parts of the building in order to observe their symmetry and design. But to the fly, whose prospect was confined to a little part of one of the stones of a single pillar, the joint beauty of the whole or the distinct use of its parts were inconspicuous, and nothing could appear but small inequalities in the surface of the hewn stone, which, in the view of that insect, seemed so many deformed rocks and precipices.'*

Here—as another teacher has said in commenting on the passage†—is the likeness of each human being as he creeps along. The sorrow which appears to us so dreadful a precipice may turn out to be nothing but the joining or cement which binds the fragments of the greater life into a solid whole. The dark path

* Berkeley, 'Essay on the Narrowness of Freethinkers' (Fraser's edition), iv. 169.

† Dean Stanley's 'Sermons on Special Occasions,' p. 343.

may be but the curve which in the full daylight of a brighter world will be seen to be the inevitable span of some majestic arch. 'Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known.'

One thing, however, among all these mysteries is absolutely clear. Such a sorrow as this helps to bind and weld the nations into one. If one member suffer —and conspicuously one member of our European Christian family—all the members suffer with it. This is not an occasion for lukewarm, or conventional, or trifling, sympathy and aid. The need is colossal, and it will not quickly pass. The details are such as to stir us to the quick. Here in Canterbury Cathedral, where the pulse of English life has been wont to beat high; here in Canterbury Cathedral, which has so many old-world links with Italy and the life of Italy—a connection which has left its beautiful mark upon the very floor of our innermost sanctuary—we shall not be backward in responding together to a claim which no doubt some of us will try to answer separately besides—the claim of a stricken sister for a sister's aid. Never in our lives can anything happen in which we are more sure that the necessity is urgent, is affrighting, is rightly calling for our aid. I have heard from or seen some of those, including our own Bishop of Gibraltar, who have themselves been to the forefront in the work of rescue. Their accounts—literally heartrending in their details—show that it is simply impossible to exaggerate the

obligation which Christian fellowship imposes on us every one. England and the Church of England are not going to let the occasion go by with its mighty appeal unanswered. It is not a time for dribbling out a little nominal assistance. Do it large-heartedly. Give double, give four times, what you had meant to give to-day, and you will not feel that you have done too much. Very seldom do the words of our Lord and Master, about the naked and the sick, apply with such literal prosaic truth to the facts of modern life as they do to-day. The bare facts, to really Christian folk, are more voiceful than any other appeal. In the name of Christ I commend them unhesitatingly, unreservedly, to your thoughtful, deliberate, ungrudging generosity to-day.

VIII. A GENERAL ELECTION*

Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

St. Matthew vi. 13.

The words are not, in the strict sense, part of the Bible. Turn to the Revised Version of St. Matthew's Gospel, and you will not find them in the text. Turn to the passage in St. Luke's Gospel where the Lord's Prayer is given. No such concluding words are there. I think we may be fairly sure that these words—the Doxology as we call them—were not spoken by our Lord or taught by Him to His disciples as part of what we term distinctively the Lord's Prayer. How came they, then, to the place they hold in our English Bibles and Prayer-Books and in our own frequent use? It is no modern thing. Some twenty-five years ago—as many here will remember—a scholar at Constantinople found in an old library a little Greek manuscript containing a document, about as long, say, as the Epistle to the Galatians—called 'The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles.' The book was probably

* Canterbury Cathedral, January 2, 1910.

written in the first century, in the lifetime of many of those who had seen our Lord on earth. It may, for instance, have been read by St. John. It embodies teaching given by the Church in those first days. For many centuries nobody knew that a copy of this old book or letter, to which frequent reference is made by early teachers, was still in existence, and when it thus unexpectedly came back to light twenty-five years ago, it brought us face to face with many curious and little-known facts about those Apostolic times. It has a little chapter on prayer, which contains among other things the Lord's Prayer as the baptized men and women and children of those days used it, and there, to our great interest, at the close of the prayer, we find the Doxology. Evidently, therefore, the words, in one or other of their slightly varying forms, were in common use when Christian people of the first century said their prayers. So familiar did the phrase become in connection with the use of the Lord's Prayer, that, before long, when copies were being made of St. Matthew's Gospel, these words, either of set purpose, or possibly by a sort of natural slip upon the part of a copyist accustomed to use them, found their way into the actual text as it was written out in the chapter which told how our Master taught His disciples to pray. Hardly anything—is it not so?—could bring us more intimately into touch with the life and the worship of those earliest Christian people. We see how when using for their own exist-

ing needs, bodily and spiritual, the prayer which had come direct from their Master's lips, they linked with it a solemn remembrance of, so to speak, God's enduring care of His people from generation to generation. Even the words they thus used were not new—were not their own. They had their origin in what had happened at a great moment in Israelite history, when the nation's hero David, at the end of his long, eventful life, invoked Jehovah's blessing on the Temple which his son was to build, and in his dedicatory prayer remembered the days of old and the days to come, and the Lord's continuing rule. 'Blessed be Thou, O Lord, the God of Israel our Father for ever and ever; Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty. . . . Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as Head above all.'*

There is always a danger when we kneel in prayer that we may be thinking too much or too exclusively about what we ourselves at present need, either for soul or body, and may not be putting ourselves and our wants in their proper setting as part of the abiding, continuous kingdom of our Lord on earth. The Bible is full of that continuing thought, the Lord's rule 'from generation to generation.' And I am sure that we sometimes miss its importance. The very word, 'Almighty' God, which is most commonly upon our lips, may, if we are not careful,

* 1 Chron. xxix. 11.

mislead us a little. In the original meaning or religious use of the word thus translated, the thought is not so much the mere omnipotence—men may crouch in craven terror before a dreary omnipotence —it is rather the All-ruler, with righteousness as the essence of His rule, however hard it may sometimes be to realize it. 'Clouds and darkness are round about Him'—yes, and we cannot pierce them—but something else we know. 'Clouds and darkness are round about Him; righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His seat,' or throne. It is easy to forget or to distort that, and therefore it is worth while, when we pray 'Our Father,' to add, as those first Christians under God the Holy Spirit's guidance added, 'Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever.'

My friends, could a better thought come home to us on the first days of a new year, and of this new year? I do not suppose that the man or woman of longest memory among us can remember any new year which opened with graver perplexities in the nation's life—perplexities rather than sorrows, or even, necessarily, fears. We have all, I think, known periods of more excitement, but never of more confusion and overlapping. Our country—so it seems to me at least—is bewildered, almost dazed, by the number of large questions of public policy or public advantage which are thrust insistently, clamorously, upon it, and which apparently have got

to be faced and dealt with all at the same moment—faced and dealt with by voters educated or uneducated, clever or stupid, selfish or public-spirited, in a General Election which must presumably decide some of them, nobody quite knows how many.

The history of Great Britain differs from the history of any other old country in a great many ways; not least, I think, in this respect—we have had a continuity of system, and rule, and constitution, and usage, secular and sacred, which has in the main survived for many centuries unimpaired through all sorts of changes in the conditions of the world's life. No other European nation can say the same, or say it to the same degree. Abundant modification in details, but the structure, after all, one and the same. No building in England or in Europe offers a more telling object-lesson on those facts than this our own Cathedral. Stand in succession before the tombs or monuments of men so different, say, as Stephen Langton and Edward the Black Prince, and Henry IV., and Henry Chichele, and John Morton, and Reginald Pole, and William Howley, and Edward White Benson. Recall the surroundings of others who worshipped and worked here, but whose monuments have perished or are elsewhere—say, Anselm and Thomas Cranmer, and William Laud and John Tillotson. Let the most thoughtful historians among us reproduce in outline the conditions in which each of these men had to do

his work, and you will find beneath and behind all the obvious varieties of circumstance and opportunity a substantial unity of national conditions and available material, and even of popular sentiment and resolve, which no other country in the world could show across a period of a thousand years. 'Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.' It was the steadying reminder to those who used the Lord's Prayer long ago that their life and their prayers, their confessions and wants and failures, were no isolated episode belonging to themselves alone. They used the Lord's Prayer as asking our Father in heaven to help them to put rightly into the great fabric-web of the world's story the stitches which, in His great design as He unrolled it, belonged to them as their own task and privilege. And while they strove, in keeping with their prayer, to make the busy world more like what His kingdom ought to be, and to set forward the doing of His will among men, and to forgive those who had harmed them as they prayed to be forgiven, they added for themselves the further thought that if He, their Father, helped them to do all this, it would be the fashioning and welding of one more link in the continuous chain of a living, enduring force co-ordinating and directing the whole world's life, or, to use another figure, that, by means of their work, their stitches, the past with its ennobling memories, might be kept in touch with the unborn days and

peoples that were still to come—for 'Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.'

And now—at the very opening of a new year in the first decade of a century which closes the second thousand years of Christianity in the world, we—that is to say, you and I and our fellow-countrymen alive to-day—have got our opportunities to use, our conditions to meet, our responsibility to carry and fulfil, for the selfsame land and Church and people who were given those great things to do of old and did them—did them often very inadequately and even poorly, but in the main strove with the help of God to be faithful to their trust. Of course, we think and say that it is much more difficult to rise to all that now than it was in old times, and that to-day's controversies are so prosaic and sordid and commonplace, and that people, especially those who differ from us, are so one-sided and unfair, and that public men are not what they used to be, and that, in short—well, in short, it is very hard nowadays to put it upon a sacred level at all, and to regard the decisions we have to make and the votes we have to give as sacred things. Now, remember that people almost always did think so, and say so, about the controversies and conditions of their own time, and the speeches and votes of their own time. It is not till you get a good way off from it that you feel able to see that some particular episode in English political history was just the quiet, or perhaps the

unquiet, working out of God's plan through the ordinary people of the day. Or, again, some of us may even feel when we read each day's articles, or walk past the hoardings and look at the bills and pictures, that it is almost irreverent to speak of these things as having a place in our prayers. Why so? These things, if anything on earth, go to the making of English history of to-day, go to the fashioning of English opinion to-day, go to the choice of leaders who (whether they think of it so or not) will have in the next few years to carry, for the country's weal or woe, the trust which God lays upon central men. So it does matter—matter intensely, matter most sacredly—and the real irreverence would lie not in looking on these things as coming under the care of our Father in heaven, and appropriate therefore to our prayers, but in regarding them as being, somehow or other, outside our higher, deeper life. They are not outside the purview of the living Lord, to whom we are directly answerable for what we say and do, for our straightforwardness or our want of it, for our fairness or unfairness, for our pains or lack of pains to understand to the very best of our power the real issues which are honestly and actually at stake, the real perils which, for the sake of all we hold dear now and in the coming days, have to be avoided, or guarded against, or met. It is not really our matter to do as we please with. We have far larger and more permanent things to

think about than our petty personal interests. The history of our Empire, at home and across the sea, is fashioned at such junctures. 'Thine, O Lord, is the kingdom for ever and ever.'

Turn from these perhaps larger and more general considerations to the practical and even personal question. What ought each man of us to do so as to prevent the lower, commoner impulse or inclination from getting hold of him and keeping him on the lower level, and hindering or spoiling the larger sweep of thought and purpose? Is there a purer atmosphere attainable, in which we can see the questions at stake without the rather dirty haze in which they look coarse and common? I think there is, but it is not at all easy to get above the marsh and fog. I venture, though rather diffidently, to put it thus: Every man of fair intelligence ought surely to be able, if he will set himself to think over the matter quietly, to get beyond mere personal interest, beyond the mere inquiry, 'How is this or that change likely to affect my pocket?' and to look out on the country's life, and to ask himself, 'Which line of policy, if it is followed for a few years, will, so far as I can judge, make England happier, purer, more worthy of its great past, better able to train its children wisely and well for using properly the large opportunities, both new and old, which will be theirs as this century runs on and we elder people pass away?' I hope everybody

in this Cathedral to-night looks forward to some bettering of our common life in England before another generation has passed, looks forward to a purer home-life, a higher standard of men's morality, more universal and intelligent temperance and self-control, wiser and wider and more practical advance in education, a more eager and trustful interlacing of young Colonies and old Motherland, in that sense a 'turning of the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers.' Again, we look and long for a lessening, or, if it might be, an ending of industrial strife, a disappearance of unnatural hostility or jealous prejudice in the relation of religious bodies to one another; and, as the best security and cohesive force for all this progress, a firmer grip, by people generally, of the solid realities of the Christian Creed, with its ordered ministry of Word and Sacrament, the Christian Creed which, in many varieties of application, has, be it remembered, lain for hundreds of years at the core of England's power and usefulness in the world's life. Every one, as I have said, hopes, surely hopes at least, for some such bettering. Every Christian man ought, I think, to expect it, if he believes in an answer to his prayers. But in such weeks as are upon us now, hope, or even expectancy, is not enough. Such an occasion, when it comes, is an occasion for stern effort too—effort of two kinds. First, the determination to do a really hard thing: to

disentangle for ourselves with quiet perseverance the great issues from the smaller ones, and to make up our minds on which side the balance falls. This is no easy task just at present, for men are obviously finding that their old conventional traditions of party allegiance are much less applicable than usual, and that for most people the questions require resetting. I do not scruple to say that we can legitimately and rightly fall upon our knees and ask God to clear and guide our thoughts at an hour when much may turn upon what our decision is.

And then comes the second stage of effort. If we are clearly resolved upon which side public duty lies, we are entitled—perhaps we are bound—to do all that in us lies to make that cause prevail. But there we are faced by a new peril. It is lamentably easy—every news-sheet shows it just now—to be so unfair in argument as to weaken our whole aptitude and power of straightforwardness. That men rightly regarded as truthful in ordinary life should be almost expected at election times to make serious statements of policy which are so exaggerated as to be simply, and even grossly or audaciously, untrue, is a humiliating fact in a Christian country. Happily there are prominent exceptions among leading statesmen on either side. But the peril is evident—you can scarcely open a newspaper which reports political speeches, or walk down a few by-streets, without examples. Hence the need of manly resolve and

deliberate self-restraint. 'The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.'

Once more, let no one say that these are not things about which to say our prayers in church and at home. To be shy and diffident in doing so is quite a modern scruple, due to several independent causes, among them to a reaction against the partisan political prayers which were enjoined and used in churches and chapels in England and Scotland two hundred or two hundred and fifty years ago—in the days depicted, say, in 'Woodstock,' or 'Old Mortality,' or 'Peveril of the Peak.' Our older Prayer-Books—any that were published sixty years ago—contained for use on certain national anniversaries—November 5, January 30, May 29—forms of service which, owing to the language in which the prayers and thanksgivings are couched, would be repellent to us to-day. It is not of any such prayers that we are speaking now. To identify the political or social cause which we support with the eternal truth of God, and to describe its opponents as His foes, is always presumptuous, and may easily be profane. It is not presumptuous or profane to ask Him in these anxious weeks to purify our aims and endeavours, to enlarge and deepen our human sympathies, and to establish and strengthen in us the temper of mind which shall fit us for so high a duty as that of helping to shape the policy of our country both in Church and State. The man who will offer

such a prayer, and who will, along with it, use every reasonable means to inform himself aright, and not from one side only, about the true contemporary facts, religious, educational, and social, and (if his powers admit of it) economic, is not likely to give his vote amiss on whichever side he cast it. We clergy—I ask you to remember it when you pray for us—have a difficult task at such a time. It would be an evil day for the country were our pulpits to become political platforms; but we clergy are shirking a grave responsibility if we fail at so great a juncture to call upon our fellow-countrymen, in the name of God, whose ministers we are, to think and think again upon the seriousness of their trust, and to pray quite simply to Him for a right judgment before they stand at the ballot-box.

One word more. We have been talking about prayer and about the early Christians' way of reminding themselves, when they used the Lord's Prayer, that our Father in heaven is a living King, with a continuous rule from generation to generation. The kingdoms of the world—the British Empire among them—are His. 'Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.' But look also at the form of the prayer itself. It is meant for us all if we are Christian folk. We are to offer it together. 'Our Father.' Is it straining a point to say that these words should be a special help to us in time of controversy? If, standing on different sides in a

political fight, we are yet all of us in earnest, then the joint prayer goes up from opposing political camps, from separate sections or classes of society, far too much sundered from one another, from separate bodies of Englishmen sundered religiously—again far too widely—in their worship and their work. Realize that when you begin the Lord's Prayer you take all these with you, or at least you are prepared in heart and spirit to do so. But are you? Are you really? Does your ordinary thought and talk about those wrong-headed or wrong-hearted opponents show it? 'Our Father'—ours and theirs. Can we say that that is easy? For some people, perhaps, it is, either because they are exceptionally wide in sympathy, or because they are exceptionally apathetic and dull. But to very many of us I am quite certain that it is not easy at all. The days of persecution are over—we no longer burn people because they disagree with us. But there are other forms of reprisal besides burning or flogging—insinuations can wound as well as whipcord. Think of it when you next say deliberately 'Our Father'—recalling all that the words imply. My friends, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who was born into this earth on Christmas Day, Who gave us the message of our Father's love and the prayer to our Father which we can use, Who died for us upon the Cross and rose again, is alive and present in England, in Canterbury, now, as we begin a new year with a new date. Nineteen hundred and ten

years! From what? From the day at Bethlehem when He came and made all the difference to the world, and taught us the new meaning of fellowship and love in our Father's Kingdom. It is as His disciples that we take part now in such action as may, according to our best belief and hope, make better and truer and more Christian this bit of our Father's Kingdom upon earth. 'For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.'

IX. THE CORONATION IN PROSPECT*

The powers that be are ordained of God.

ROMANS XIII. 1.

THERE are a good many verses in the Bible which, as the Christian centuries have passed, have been in constant use as motto texts for sermons, and it would be profitable—and startling—to students of religious thought and of Church History were some industrious man to select a few such texts and to reproduce specimen sermons upon them from different epochs even of English Church life. Such a catena of sermons—say, on Inspiration, or on Baptism, or on the fulfilment of Prophecy, or on Old Testament morality—would show strange contrasts, even if the inquirer confined himself to standard and authoritative English divines within the last three hundred years. And perhaps one of the most startling of all such catenæ, in the variety of teaching it would exhibit, would be a series of sermons, at intervals of

* To the University of Cambridge, January 26, 1902.

thirty or forty years in the last three centuries, upon the duty and authority of the Civil Power and our own obligations towards those who wield it. It would be easy to compile such a series. Among the prominent men who have left us careful sermons on this great topic, using not seldom this very text, are Thomas Cranmer, Lancelot Andrewes, Gilbert Burnet, Henry Sacheverell, Joseph Butler, Charles Simeon, John Keble, Arthur Stanley, Mandell Creighton; and in the contemporary atmosphere which the mention of each name suggests the problem seems, as it were, to have been reset in some quite new shape in every generation as it came.

It occasionally happens—it did happen at some of the epochs I have named—that, roughly speaking, everybody in the country is thinking at once about the same thing, and that a preacher, if he speaks at all, must speak directly or indirectly upon that one absorbing subject. It was so in England, and far beyond England, on this Sunday last year.* It will be so in England next June, if all go well; and if that kind of focussing of the public gaze, the public mind, upon a single incident, is to be as useful as it ought to be, it is vital that people of every sort should be thinking about it long before, should be realizing the importance of it to their country's life, and, somehow or other, to their own several lives as well, and should be making it the centre, or even the

* Queen Victoria died January 22, 1902.

pivot, of a vast number of daily prayers, private as well as public. If that happens, the actual day, when it does come, will have ten times the significance and a hundred times the usefulness it would otherwise possess. Probably no small number of the people whose thoughts turn at all to next June's Coronation Day are looking on it simply or mainly as a great holiday pageant. A few weeks ago, for example, a prominent English thinker and orator referred to it in an elaborate allocution as being an episode of little general interest except to those whose thoughts are chiefly directed to matters of dressmaking and tailoring. And similar words were spoken by responsible men in Parliament not many days ago. Now, of course, the pageant and the processions, the pomp and show, are merely incidents or accidents surrounding—most appropriately surrounding and emphasizing—the central act. The essence of what takes place is the religious rite, when the Sovereign is anointed and vested and crowned. That great act is rightly called the 'sacring' of a king. It does not make him king; he is that already; but it declares, beyond doubt or cavil, in the name of the English people, and by the voice of their foremost religious officer, that the nation will have its King consecrated as Christ's servant, and will thus declare, in the most solemn and public way that can possibly be devised, its corporate allegiance to the King of kings. Again and

again that principle of fealty to Christ is enunciated in the actual wording of the service: 'Be you anointed, blessed, and consecrated king over this people whom the Lord your God hath given you to rule and govern. . . . Our Lord Jesus Christ pour down upon your head and heart the blessing of the Holy Ghost and prosper the work of your hands.' Or again: 'With this Sword do justice . . . and so faithfully serve our Lord Jesus Christ in this life that you may reign for ever with Him in the life which is to come. . . . The Lord your God endue you with knowledge and wisdom, with majesty and with power from on high.' I need not labour what is thus self-evident. What I desire to suggest, or rather to remind you of, is that the great principle involved in and underlying those sonorous phrases is one which deeply concerns our English public life, domestic and Imperial; and, further, that the national act is fraught with so much that is peculiar and perplexing, that we do well to give ourselves ample time, before the memorable day arrives, to think out the various difficulties and paradoxes, and even contradictions, which, in its twentieth-century setting, and under the modern conditions of our Empire, this great solemnity seems to involve. We certainly shall not think these out adequately in the stir of the radiant June days to which people are already looking forward; we must do it beforehand; we should be beginning now.

It is noteworthy that the focussing of our thoughts upon this great symbolic act happens at the very time when some of the problems it suggests are already exercising the mind of every thoughtful Englishman. It is the merest truism to say that the dawn of the new century has found the English people looking at their Empire in a way they never looked at it before. The recurring object-lesson of Queen Victoria's great Jubilee days was more fruitful of thought to the average man than those who devised the pageants had dared to expect; and when to the poetry and the sentiment of those noteworthy days succeeded, in stern practical prose, at a moment of danger, the rallying of our fellow-citizens from every quarter of the globe, a new note was struck in the music of our nation's life. We had been quietly going on our daily way without recognizing the greatness of our world-wide burden of privilege and of responsibility. But our awakening came. As Dr. Westcott has expressed it: 'The splendid pageants brought the fact vividly before our eyes . . . and then a great peril disclosed its significance. The appeal to Imperial obligation was answered by the voice of a united host of peoples . . . and at once the Empire was revealed.'*

And now the journey, absolutely unique in the world's history, of our Heir Apparent and his Consort has made the meaning of these things easier

* 'Lessons from Work,' p. 274.

and more obvious to everyone. It is true, I suppose, to say that for one man who thought about them ten years ago there are scores who are thinking and speaking about them now. And just at the moment when these thoughts are everywhere astir—nebulous and inchoate perhaps, but real—something happens which fashions them into shape for us; an event lying quite outside the personal experience of nearly all of us—the 'sacring' of the English King—the idea, that is, of a world-wide Empire expressed in terms of Christian faith and prayer. The matter does call imperatively for resolute thought on the part of those who care about our public weal; for it would be vain to deny that it bristles with bewildering questions. Glance with me quite simply at one or two; not with the futile aim of trying here and now to solve the perplexities, or even to contribute to their solution; but rather to remind ourselves how manifold they are, and what a claim they have upon the output of our best thinkers at home and across the seas.

(1) Look, for example, at one very obvious anomaly. In Westminster Abbey next June, alongside of Christian potentates from England and her Colonies, will stand, I suppose, some of the foremost representatives of our Indian Empire, aliens in race and in faith, yet knit to us as brothers in the bonds of loyalty and mutual trust—fellow-workers, albeit very dimly, in the endeavour to realize our great

ideal: the ideal of personal freedom passing by degrees into equality of opportunity; local self-government, established or in prospect; absolute justice between man and man. The presence of those men will be part of the object-lesson as to what a Christian Empire means. Does it perchance seem to any Christian to be incongruous, or even wrong, that they, strangers to our Creed, should be there at all as we consecrate our King to his high service in the name of, and in fealty to, the Lord Christ? This is a question not to be lightly answered; but in proportion to the carefulness of thought will the answer, I think, grow clear. They ought at such an hour to be there. Their presence is in absolute keeping with the principle which underlies our Indian rule, a principle laid down with unmistakable clearness in the memorable proclamation in which our great Queen, forty-three years ago, assumed the direct government of India.

It will be remembered how in that famous document—drafted, we now know, by the Queen's own hand—she described her own 'firm reliance on the truth of Christianity' as being the very thought which would strengthen her in maintaining absolute religious liberty for the whole peoples of India, 'that none be in any wise favoured, none molested or disquieted, by reason of their religious faith,' and how the proclamation ended with an earnest prayer to God that strength might be vouchsafed to Queen

and officers alike for the task of carrying out this promise of even-handed justice and beneficent rule. And now some of those who, as the loyal subjects of her son, exhibit and represent the outcome of the notable pledge she gave, will witness, as we hope, that son's Christian consecration to a like responsibility, and will learn how a Christian people expects an answer to its prayer. Their presence with us on that day may be in one sense a trifling matter, important only because of its symbolism or because of its uniqueness in the history of Christendom. But in the strange and complex fabric of our Indian rule itself, how much there is which stirs the very sort of questioning which is brought to a point in concrete form in the crowning of a Christian Sovereign to rule over vast populations of Mohammedans and Buddhists and Hindus. Ordinary people, as we have said, are thinking now about these things in an absolutely fresh way. Student and novelist and poet give expression to our eager questionings, to our sometimes dumb bewilderment. The daily paradox of the two races, the governing and the governed, in closest, friendliest touch, and yet so immeasurably sundered all the while. The pathetic striving on our part after a comprehension which seems unattainable. Problems, philosophic and religious, of illimitable depth and range and mystery, affecting in the most perplexing way the pettiest details of prosaic daily administration—railways, and cookery, and tanks.

What on earth is to be the solution or the issue? The Coronation, if we think about its significance, forces the questions on us 'stay-at-home' people with unaccustomed insistence, and we tremble at their magnitude. Take, for example, the Indian Education problem alone, in all its range, from the University to the village school. We are Christians. They are not. Somehow or other must adequate education of every kind be given, such education of body, mind, and soul as shall fashion good and profitable Indian citizens for the days that are to be. And we Christians are perforce the educators. And, withal, the initial promise of the Queen must be scrupulously, must be in every sense 'religiously,' observed. Obviously a problem which might baffle the wisest, the most ingenious, the most experienced of administrators. But in concrete shape it has in some way or other to be daily solved, and statesmen as well as Churchmen are awake to its steadily increasing gravity. What has the Coronation of the King to do with it? 'Much every way,' if we can only let so concrete and pointed a presentment of the problem set us thinking and caring and praying as we Christians ought.

It is not the question of direct missionary work. That stands apart. No nobler service is being done on earth than that rendered to the people of India by the devoted men who, with the yearly increase of wisdom and tact and power from on High, are

bringing the message of a Saviour's presence and a Saviour's love within the knowledge of those who so pointedly need that aid. No wiser or more capable effort is being made for the furtherance of that great end than is made by your own noteworthy Mission to Delhi. God speed its work! These voluntary—and so far as the State is concerned, unofficial—efforts, however, lie outside the range of Governmental action, and therefore outside the thoughts to which the Coronation of the King, the Emperor of India, gives expression.

Those Governmental questions crowd in upon the mind the faster the more we dwell upon the coming scene. I have mentioned the education question only, and that only in India. But which of us is ignorant that the education question, vast as it is, is only one of many, and that India, though incomparably the greatest and most anxious field wherein this special 'white man's burden' of ours has to be carried, is not the only field. I must not, however, pursue the thought farther, and I repeat that I am attempting no solutions. All I ask to-day is, that when we are weighing what it all means, and are remembering in our prayers the Christian Sovereign of our Empire, we should have in constant recollection, as we bend our knees, the overwhelming fact of the 270 millions of his subjects in India who are at present non-Christians, and should offer with a deeper and more thoughtful conception of its meaning the Coronation

Prayer: 'Confirm and stablish him with Thy free and Princely Spirit, the Spirit of Wisdom and Government, the Spirit of Counsel and Ghostly Strength,' and should offer it with expectant—yes, expectant—hope. There is but one Power in earth or heaven which can enable any man, or body of men, to grapple hopefully with such a task. But there is that Power, and we invoke it; or, rather, we invoke Him Who wields it, 'conquering and to conquer.'

Turn again to the Coronation Service: 'Receive this Imperial Robe and Orb. And when you see this Orb set under the Cross, remember that the whole world is subject to the Power and Empire of Christ our Redeemer.' 'In hoc signo vinces.' It is true for us all. For, be the scenes of conflict and perplexity, of painful march and doubtful skirmish, as varied as they may, there is none of us but has his own place upon the field; none but has, directly or indirectly, as a citizen of the Christian Empire, his own share of the burden to carry, his own definite portion of the great trust to discharge.

(2) Pass for a few moments to a wholly different group of questions suggested to us for careful thought by the approach of the Coronation Day. Among the early duties of the newly-crowned Sovereign will be, as we hope and believe, the consideration of the settlement of our new South African Colonies, the adjustment and discharge of the added responsibilities which are already laid upon us as the outcome of

this great war. It would, of course, be miserably out of place for a preacher to enter here upon the discussion of those bewildering responsibilities, those immense perplexities.

'. . . . Non ragionam di lor
Ma guarda e passa.'

All I would say, all I would urge, is this: Let those wonderful Coronation Prayers, as we think over them beforehand, be felt to mean what they say. In the days when they were shaped or compiled, the problem of Christian rule was, in one sense, less complex than it is to-day. But the prayers hold good. For the sake of the King's South African subjects in this new century, Briton and Afrikander and Boer and Kaffir alike, we shall pray to the All-wise Guide and Arbiter that the Sovereign may not bear, may not have borne, the Sword in vain, but that to its terrible flash and swing may follow now all that makes for such order and fellowship, such mutual consideration and mutual love, as are indeed what Jesus Christ the Prince of Peace would have us feel and use and show. A sword may involve, and may therefore typify, warfare. But a sword means something more. 'Receive this Kingly Sword brought now from the Altar of God. . . . With this Sword do justice, stop the growth of iniquity, protect the Holy Church of God, help and defend widows and orphans, restore the things that are gone to decay, maintain the things that are restored, punish

and reform what is amiss, and confirm what is in good order, that, doing these things, you may be glorious in all virtue.'

There are few more difficult questions in the range of Christian politics than the question how far the rules which indisputably govern the relations of two Christian men are applicable in like manner to the relations of Christian states and peoples. Startling and unwelcome as it sounds to say so, it is, I suppose, certain that we cannot apply to the intercourse and mutual relations of nations as such the selfsame rules which we should apply to the intercourse and mutual relations of two Christian men. The law of humility and meekness, the law of self-sacrifice, nay, even the law of forgiveness, must, I suppose, when nations are concerned, have a somewhat different application from that which would be right as between individual man and man. This is, I think, true teaching; for, after all, what we call the action of a nation means in itself the action of a Sovereign or statesman on behalf of other people, whose interests he, as a Christian, must protect and care for. It is true teaching—it is, I think, Christ's teaching—but it is profoundly perplexing, and its application is obviously fraught with peril at every step. The Christian ruler or statesman, however patriotic, dares not forget that it is a Christian people on whose behalf he acts or speaks, and that that means a great deal, and carries with it a vast

responsibility. It is well, indeed, that for such a trust we should together invoke for our Sovereign a quite distinctive and special endowment of heavenly guidance and grace. 'Our Lord Jesus Christ by His Holy Anointing pour down upon your head and heart the blessing of the Holy Ghost and prosper the works of your hands, that, by the assistance of His heavenly grace, you may preserve the people committed to your charge in wealth, peace, and godliness.'

(3) One more thought, and I have done. We have been looking across the seas; look now at home. In the forefront of the perplexities of this very year lies perforce the whole problem of what needs doing for our popular education. The curious roadways along which popular education has advanced in England in the last hundred years—roadways which were at first regular and almost single, however inadequate—became, some thirty years ago, parallel or complex, and they have brought us at last to what we may call, in current phrase, barbed-wire entanglements.

But we must go forward, and the problem, unless we are to court chaos or disaster, cannot possibly be let alone. I have no solution to propound to-day. To most of us, I suppose, regarding the matter from our own particular and several standpoints, the true path of fairness and public good seems tolerably plain, but this brings us little nearer to any general

agreement. For my part, I seem to see, not one or two, but several possible exits from the imbroglio. One thing, however, is surely vital. The education of our children must, as heretofore in England, be Christian. We are responsible for seeing that on that point at least there is neither change nor hesitation. In elementary schools we are entrusted with the children, not only of those parents who care, but of those who are too callous or ignorant to give a thought themselves to the matter, and these children form the most anxious and responsible part of all our charge. Secure a definite Christian basis and background, and the detailed arrangements, whether in elementary or secondary schools, matter comparatively little.

And, once again, what has the Coronation to do with it? Just this: In this greatest internal act of our corporate life as a people—the full accrediting of our ruler to the task of rule—we make everything centre upon the religious service, the acknowledgment of the supreme sovereignty of the Lord Christ, the dedicating of our national life, in the person of its foremost representative, to the deliberate service of God, revealed in Jesus Christ. Surely the lesson of such a year will not be in vain. The prayers which a united people offers, that the whole realm may be guided, blessed, and taught, by the living Lord in whom we believe, must, to say the least, remind us of the absolute necessity of securing for

every child in that kingdom, so far as in us lies, a Christian upbringing worthy of the name. It is only one, of course, among the political responsibilities of a Christian people. But it is one which penetrates deep and reaches far.

I have said my say. I have touched only on a few problems out of many, and these perhaps not the greatest which the Coronation year propounds. You may feel that the thoughts I have suggested, so far as they are true at all, belong rather to the sunny months in prospect than to these dark January days. My point is, that if they are to help us when the pageants and the shows are dazzling people's eyes, we must be dwelling on them quietly long before. This week last year we were laying to rest, with a world-wide acclaim and a world-wide sorrow to which human history offers absolutely no parallel, one who had helped us to realize what our grandfathers sixty-three years ago asked God to give to the English people. The surroundings, the accidents, the personal figures, are different now from what they were in our grandfathers' days. But the basis is the same, and the prayers for Sovereign and people will, I am persuaded, go up to God this year more thoughtfully, more preparedly, and with a yet deeper and more intelligent appreciation of what ought to be alike the principle, the significance, and the force, for the world's good, of a Christian people's deliberate resolve.

X. THE DEATH OF KING EDWARD*

They go from strength to strength.

PSALM LXXXIV. 7.

WHO wrote this Psalm, or when, we do not know. And it matters little. It is one of the Psalms which belong to all time, and are a possession for everybody. The poet teaches us to look forth upon a life, whether of a man or a nation, 'moving through variety of circumstance. through achievements and delays, through discipline and sorrow,' with, on the whole, continuous gain. It is the main lesson of the Old Testament, the Divinely-ordered life of a people who moved, who grew, notwithstanding all their faults and failures, 'from strength to strength.' We see clearly enough the Divine ordering, the Divine discipline, when the Bible brings it out for us. Are you sure that we should have seen it in the narrative of Israel's life if it had been told by common chroniclers? Or would England's story be less sacred

* Westminster Abbey, May 8, 1910.

than that, less impregnate with evidence of Divine guidance, if we had ears to hear and eyes to see? No place on earth can better help us to answer that question than Westminster Abbey. No period of English history—of that I am quite persuaded—draws the picture or bears the message more clearly than these years of our own lifetime. We may have missed or misused the opportunity of vision or of action. But beyond all question it has been ours. Why are these aisles thronged, beyond ordinary throng, to-night? Something has happened. Yes, and that something is not an isolated incident or calamity, out of touch with our island story as a whole. It is a bit of 'revelation'—the unveiling of the Divine guidance and discipline of our people's life. Regard it rightly, and we shall find it not alien to our thought, 'From strength to strength.'

Very valuable in a nation's life is the note of unity which is struck by what may be called the common ownership of a central home. It has often been pointed out that a striking result of the creation and growth of those high offices which break the level monotony of ordinary life, is that they bring before us common things, common joys and anxieties and sorrows, in a form at once personal and public. To some extent this is always true. It is overwhelmingly true when the central home is simply and genuinely endeared to the hearts of the people. That endearment is a living factor in English life

to-day. And wide experience has taught us how it is through the central home and household of a nation's life — the representative home in which everybody claims a share—that a trumpet-call to the people at large can ring out in clearest note, whether it be a call to thanksgiving, or to patient waiting, or to stern conflict, or to high enterprise and hope, or to the quiet facing of sudden bereavement and loss. Most of us who are here to-night have, within our own memory, heard every one of those national trumpet-calls.

There are probably none here who can recollect the bright summer day seventy-two years ago, when the nobles and commons and clergy of England were gathered on this spot, to do something new in English life—'to welcome to the throne a Sovereign whose youthful promise and queenly grace awakened again a flame of loyal devotion, a spring of serious hope such as men thought had wellnigh died out from amongst us.' That seems far-off history now. But we can most of us remember how, half a century later, in 1887, within and around the Abbey's storied walls, the children and grandchildren of those who had knelt here on Queen Victoria's Coronation Day met as mature or perhaps old men and women to thank the Lord of heaven and earth for the answer given to their fathers' prayer in the fifty years of wise and firm and gentle rule which, through cloud and sunshine, she had wielded since she vowed her

maiden vow upon this selfsame spot. 'From strength to strength.' When, ten years later, the great pageant from every part of an Empire which has had no parallel on earth moved through the streets to St. Paul's Cathedral, the mingled shouts and tears of loyalty and joy were again only the surface token of what lay behind and below, the deep-hearted thankfulness of a Christian people for God's overflowing answer to their prayers. 'From strength to strength.' When, four years later, in 1901, we bore her to her honoured rest, and the solemn booming of the guns along the sea symbolized a grateful sorrow which was perhaps more truly world-wide than any single human sentiment has at one moment ever been, we sorrowed not—even in the lower, the secular, the national sense—as people without hope. 'From strength to strength.' The murky war-clouds were already lifting when she passed to her rest, or to other ministries of service beyond our ken. They rolled away, leaving our country surely for the time robuster through the discipline that those years had brought.

Are we sure that we have held quite steadily—in the common social and industrial life of town and country—to the lessons of those years? Is there any fear of our slipping carelessly back into a commoner and more selfish groove, a mood much easier and less strenuous? Ask yourselves the question now, 'lest we forget.'

And when eight years ago we were summoned hither to crown the King, who was to bear forward in his turn the solemn yet inspiring trust, men greeted the summons with what was almost light-someness of heart. 'The whole world,' said a prominent writer—'the whole world seems resolved to make King Edward next week its central figure.' And then again a trumpet-call, to give us a message that we needed. 'From strength to strength.' In a single forenoon, some forty-eight hours before the moment when every eye and heart were to be fixed upon the ancient chair in this Abbey choir, we were suddenly summoned to look elsewhere instead—to look away from

> 'That immemorial regal stone,
> Symbol of sovereignty,'

away from the streets

> 'Where the long glories prance and triumph by,'

and to turn instead to the hushed sick-room, to lift our hands in silent prayer to the Lord to whom alone belong the issues of life and death, and to wait, and to be still. Who that was present on this very spot on June 24, 1902, when upon the little crowd of busy men and women, notables and musicians and artificers, making active, bustling, eager preparation for the glad day, there fell the tidings that the King was stricken with grave illness,

and they kneeled down and prayed—who that was with us at that noontide can forget it while life lasts?

Through the days that followed we waited, we said our prayers; and again, as had happened to him thirty years before, he passed back from the very gates of death into the highway of strenuous life—this time into the life of exacting service, of anxious public care, of unremitting and ennobling responsibility, which, with ever-deepening love and thankfulness, we have watched and known.

'From strength to strength.' Does any thoughtful man doubt that to the solemn facts of those crowded and eventful weeks—when men 'feared as they entered into the cloud'—the English people and the English King owed a lasting debt? Thousands who had looked upon a coronation as a mere pageant awoke to find in it a stirring, a solemn, a practical reminder of the mutual and joint answerableness of King and people to the living God, 'by whom alone Kings reign and Princes decree justice.' Need I remind you of the words of the great service itself?

'With this Sword do justice, stop the growth of iniquity, protect the Holy Church of God, help and defend widows and orphans, restore the things that are gone to decay, maintain the things that are restored, punish and reform what is amiss, and confirm what is in good order.'

And again—

'Receive this Imperial Robe and Orb: . . . and when you see this Orb set under the Cross, remember that the whole world is subject to the Power and Empire of Christ our Redeemer.'

And again—

'The Lord God Almighty grant that . . . all the people of the land, fearing God, and honouring the King, may by the merciful superintendency of the Divine Providence, and the vigilant care of our gracious Sovereign, continually enjoy peace, plenty, and prosperity; through Jesus Christ our Lord.'

Brothers and sisters, so we prayed eight years ago for our King and for his people. Those prayers were not in vain. 'From strength to strength.'

And what am I to say about the message which has come to us now? the solemn trumpet-call which has just rung out? Can we again turn to our text and use it—'From strength to strength'? I think we can. Four days ago the last thought in anybody's mind—as men looked out into the misty conflict of political life and listened to the strife of tongues—was that the central figure of all might be taken suddenly from our head. We had learned to count unhesitatingly upon the mature sobriety of his quiet judgment of affairs, upon his tactful and experienced estimate of men and things, upon the ripe and varied knowledge which he possessed of State polity

in its largest sense, upon the unchallengeable fairness of his constitutional attitude amid the cross-currents of political and social strife. And, for the moment at all events, we are simply bewildered by the sudden closing of the door and the ending of his present-day service to the Empire whose initial confidence in him had been from his accession onwards deliberately deepened and maintained. Charm of personal presence and kindliness is of priceless value to the man who is called upon to hold a position so perilous in its greatness of opportunity—opportunity of use or misuse. But it needs more than personal charm, more than experience, or tact, or kindliness, to carry aright the burden which lies upon a Sovereign's shoulders. There must be a large and steady sense of public duty. There must be a genuine and far-reaching care to maintain the honour of a great people and to rule worthily of its high traditions. And in an Empire as varied and as vast as ours there must be an effective interest in the mutual responsibilities and the interdependent life of races and of classes and of creeds. And withal, for the whole world's sake, there must, in such a position, be a deliberate and persistent determination to seek peace and ensue it.

The very enumeration is enough to make one bow the head in prayer for any man or woman upon earth to whom so mighty a trust is given. How easy to make, on this side or that, a mistake which may

have immeasurable and disastrous consequence! We are allowed, in the quiet retrospect which this solemn week brings, to ask whether we can see, in these nine busy years, mistakes of sovereignty which might thus become seed-plots of ill. If we cannot, dare we—above all, dare we on this hallowed spot—disconnect that fact from our prayers and his upon his Coronation Day? 'From strength to strength.'

And suddenly—in a few hours—when no man looked for it, the life here is ended. In the presence of those who loved him best, and with the same quiet courage which had looked death in the face eight years ago, he passed—it is not yet forty-eight hours since—into the life beyond our ken. To-day the whole round world is commending to our Father's keeping and consolation our widowed Queen, who tended his last earthly hours with the gentle love which for all these years has knit to her in imperishable bonds the heart of the whole peoples of our race. In reverent and loving sympathy we invoke the Divine blessing upon every member of that Royal home. It would be irreverent to dwell upon what this sorrow means to them; but they know, and we know, the place they hold in all our hearts and prayers.

But, my friends, there is another word which it is our privilege to say to-night. We look outward and onward in eager and expectant hope to the life-work of him who is called, with a suddenness almost

fearful in its inrush, to the greatest post of rule among the sons of men. It is strange how often what is called the *sors liturgica*, the accident of our appointed lesson of Holy Scripture, has a startling appropriateness to the facts of the hour. We have listened this evening to familiar words. But though they fell to be read in ordinary course to-night, they rang out—is it not so?—with a fresh significance.

'Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise. . . . Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee.'

Those who listened yesterday to the quiet words of the brave, resolute, straightforward man, of high purpose and of simple and disciplined life, who is called in the prime of his manhood to take up duties so overwhelming in their greatness, have cause surely for thankfulness and hope. Thousands have already read them. They will to-morrow be in the hands of the whole Empire.

'My heart is too full for me to address you to-day in more than a few words. . . . I have lost not only a father's love, but the affectionate and intimate relations of a dear friend and adviser. . . . To endeavour to follow in his footsteps, and at the same time to uphold the constitutional government of these realms, will be the earnest object of my life. I am deeply sensible of the very heavy

responsibilities which have fallen upon me. I know that I can rely upon Parliament and upon the people of these Islands and of my Dominions beyond the Seas for their help in the discharge of these arduous duties, and for their prayers that God will grant me strength and guidance. I am encouraged by the knowledge that I have in my dear wife one who will be a constant helpmate in every endeavour for our people's good.'

There is no man or woman within these walls but will to-night pray God to help our King—our King—to make those humble, hopeful, high resolves come true. 'From strength to strength.' The promise of early years, the reverent answer to the sudden, the unexpected call—these will bear fruit, under God's guiding hand, for him and for his Empire's good. It would be faithless to doubt it. God save the King! God have him and those near and dear to him in His holy keeping day by day!

One word more. We have spoken of the King whom we have lost, and of the King whom we have gained. But the message is for us all. 'From strength to strength.' Do you doubt that if the story of this memorable week, the summary and outcome of many memorable years, had been told to us in Holy Scripture, say by an Isaiah, or an Amos, or an Ezra, we should have been stirred to the depths of our being by the clearness

of its message, the clearness and certainty of the call God is making upon every single one of us to do our part in quiet, consistent loyalty to Him our living Lord? We have often been advised by our best teachers to search the history of our own people for the realities of God. 'We are a people'—said a great speaker in the English Parliament two centuries and a half ago—'we are a people with the stamp of God upon us . . . whose appearances and providences among us are not to be outmatched by any story.' 'His appearances and providences among us.' Now, if ever—this week, if ever—they are here, they are potent and voiceful in the stress alike of joy and sorrow, of bereavement and anxiety and hope. And if the message of the past will shape itself—as it can—into the resolve of the present, and that into humble, expectant prayer for the coming days, the outcome is sure. 'From strength to strength.'

'O God, we have heard with our ears, and our fathers have declared unto us, the noble works that Thou didst in their days, and in the old time before them.' 'O Lord, arise, help us, and deliver us for Thine honour.'

XI. THE FIRST AND GREAT COMMANDMENT*

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

St. Matthew xxii. 37-39.

A Church Congress is apt, perhaps rightly, to avoid dealing with first principles—with the fundamental verities of creed and life. If discussions are to be practical, we must have our postulates to start with. If these had to be severally argued out afresh on each occasion, we should never get on, never reach the discussions which we have come here to share or to listen to. In an assembly like ours, we are happily able to take for granted a good many things which could not be taken for granted everywhere. But that 'taking for granted' has perils of its own, and it is probably well that we should now and then, and especially, perhaps, in an opening sermon, fall back upon and test the firmness of our

* Bristol Cathedral. Opening of the Church Congress, October 13, 1903.

foundations, and ask ourselves or one another about the bases upon which rest the whole structure which furnishes us with matter for a week's debate. This is what I desire to do in a very simple and unambitious way this morning.

Not long ago a memorable discussion took place in New York with regard to the life and growth of the Christian faith. In the course of it one of the best-known naval officers in the world, Captain Mahan, maintained with cogent eloquence that the Church of Christ is yielding perilously to the temptation to reverse the order of the two commandments of the Gospel—'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God,' 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' It would, I think, be scarcely possible to express more pointedly the lesson which we ought to be learning, or at all events the question which we ought to be asking ourselves, at the present juncture in our Church's story. It penetrates to the very foundation both of faith and life. For ourselves, I would state the position thus: We have come here this week as members of Christ's Society, in avowed and deliberate loyalty to our Lord God, revealed in Jesus Christ. Further, we have come in order that we may take counsel together upon the best ways of making our loyalty to Him bear fruit in mutual help and encouragement to one another, and in projects of deliberate well-planned service to His children here on earth. Nothing could possibly be better.

Only we want—I want—to ask whether it is certain that we are, to use Captain Mahan's words, taking Christ's commandments in their right order. I do not allege for a moment that we are really neglecting either of them, however inadequately we may be responding; but I do allege that there is a peril of our obedience, such as it is, to the second command, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,' being ineffectual and poor, just because we are putting it first, and not where Christ put it, second.

I know nothing of what anybody is going to say in our Congress this week, but I shall be surprised if we do not hear from those who are best qualified to speak to us a reiteration of the familiar terms of disappointment, perplexity—yes, and surprise—that what we are trying to do results in so little after all; that our eager output of zealous work in fifty directions at once, our constantly multiplying activities, the pathetic self-sacrifice of so many, the rivalry, keen and yet brotherly, of overlapping organizations and societies for old and young—that all these things, loyally, patiently done in Christ's name and for Christ's sake, should somehow or other fall so flat and produce in the end so much less than we should confidently have expected had we been looking forward from the starting-point, and standing at the dawn instead of the noontide or afternoon of the Church's working day. If this be so, if we are to

listen again, as we have listened before, to candid and humiliating admissions of the insufficiency—some would even say the futility—of so much of what we are eagerly doing and planning, it is surely worth while to try, by the help of God, to put our finger upon the secret of such failures or shortcomings. Is there not a cause? Tentatively, apologetically, but not without a sense of conviction, I suggest what it may be.

But there are two things which I should like to say in deprecation of the frequent scoffs to which we listen about the undue multiplication of our outward activities, or what people call our 'machinery.' We are beset and hindered, men tell us, by mere superficial fuss and stir. Societies and committees, we are told, have killed the true spirit of wisdom and counsel, and we lack, without missing it, the quiet deliberation and the depth of knowledge and purpose which belonged to the earlier centuries of the Church's life, when, under the hand of great leaders inspired of God, she was growing to her strength. My brothers, the accusation, even if it take the form of a taunt, is worth attending to, and gives food for profitable thought. For answer, I would remind you of the stimulating words of a great man—Churchman, scholar, historian—whom many of us knew well, whom all of us admired and loved, and whom we laid to rest in his cathedral this very week seven years ago.

'Let us remember,' says Archbishop Benson,* 'that no mistake could be more unpractical than to suppose that because [nowadays] councils are not summoned by the will of Princes and recorded in folio acts, therefore the conciliar life of the Church is at an end. It is being lived out with more vigour than ever in the endless committees and meetings of the age. It is in their minutes that the conciliar history peculiar to this time is being written, as it is by their wide and large operations that the greatest effects are being produced. No doubt it is in fragments. No doubt time is wasted. No doubt great personalities are less conspicuous. But if mistakes are made, they also are not on so grand a scale as once they were, and the work is being done. He who is spreading the English Church the whole world over, and building up her dioceses so fast, and so uniting them in the common run of incidents, which seem small one by one, yet are so uncontrollable even in detail, and are growing so majestic in their sum—He is the selfsame Spirit of Spirits "*Qui Concilio olim Apostolico insedit. Huic etiam nostro nunc insideat.*"'

And if we have a right to some measure of confidence as to the manner of our work, not less, I firmly believe, have we a right to thank God for clear, solid evidence of the definite progress to be seen and chronicled amid all our failures. I have

* 'The Seven Gifts,' p. 56.

quoted Edward White Benson. I turn to a name in some ways weightier still. Do you remember how Joseph Barber Lightfoot, just thirty years ago, gave heart to the whole Church by the comparison he drew between the progress of ancient and modern missions? His memorable words hold good, surely, in other parts of our work besides the mission field. Speaking of the disappointment so generally felt at our small results, he writes:

'It is my conviction that this disappointment is quite as unreasonable as it is faithless. I believe that all such misgivings will melt before a thorough investigation; that if we would lay this sceptre of ill success, we need only the courage to face it; and, above all, that an appeal to history will dispel any gloomy forebodings on this score. It will be found, if I mistake not, that the resemblances of early and recent missions [and what Dr. Lightfoot said of missions is applicable to every eager, thoughtful effort for the cause of Christ] are far greater than their contrasts; that both alike have had to surmount the same difficulties and been chequered by the same vicissitudes: that both alike exhibit the same inequalities of progress, the same alternations of success and failure, periods of acceleration followed by periods of retardation, when the surging wave has been sucked back in the retiring current, while yet the flood has been rising steadily all along, though the unobservant eye might fail to

mark it, advancing towards the final consummation when the earth shall be covered with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. History is an excellent cordial for the drooping courage.'*

My digression has been too long. I return to the point that, however potent the activities of our Church's life to-day, they might and would be far more fruitful than they are were we more consistently loyal to the principles and motives of action which Christ laid down for us—namely, that our love for all about us and our eagerness to help them should be the sequel and outcome of a genuine, a reverent, an intelligent devotion to, and love for, our Father who is in heaven.

'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart—soul—mind. This is the *first* and great commandment. And the *second* is like unto it, Thou shall love thy neighbour as thyself.'

Theories are often sterile. Let us come to something concrete. For eighteen months past we have all of us been witnesses, we have most of us been parties, in an anxious and difficult controversy which has come by force of circumstances to turn mainly upon the religious teaching given to little children in our schools. Some of us have had to talk almost ceaselessly about it for a year and a half. We are to talk about it again to-night. No controversy in which I, for one, have ever taken part has been

* 'Historical Essays,' p. 72.

so inexpressibly painful as this, for the simple reason that upon a subject of deep religious importance we have found ourselves in apparent, though I trust only temporary, opposition to a great body of good Christian men with whom we are eagerly anxious on all matters where it is possible—and they are many—to stand shoulder to shoulder on behalf of the Christian verities happily common to us all. To differ acutely from Christian brethren in a matter of this sort cuts us (I speak for myself at least) to the very quick, and we long for the opportunity—if there were a lull in the strife of tongues—to promote a truer understanding of what is our real aim, and to make it clear that we are not so far apart as men suppose. But whether that better understanding can at this juncture be brought about or not, we are bound, as it seems to me, in simple loyalty to our Master, to contend unflinchingly for the one great principle that the teaching of the elements of the Gospel message of the Lord Jesus Christ shall, so far as in us lies, form the essential—yes, for all children whose parents desire them to receive it, the essential—basis and groundwork of our school work, and that where the maintenance of that principle is a definite characteristic of a school committed to our trust, it shall not, if we can help it, be abrogated or destroyed. The real purpose of our schools is at once the noblest and the most important to which educational effort can be applied, the forma-

tion of Christian character. We are eagerly keen about these schools, not primarily for the mere imparting of more varied technical knowledge, greatly as we desire that; not primarily, say, in order that our children, when they grow to be artificers, may outdo the craftsmen of other nations in their skill, but in order that they may grow to be men and women of purer, stronger, braver character than we have been. And for the formation of Christian character we want to teach in its fulness and entirety, so far as the child's mind can grasp it, the Gospel-message of our Lord Jesus Christ, and so to teach it that the children themselves, under the guidance and example of teachers who really care, may feel it to be the most important of all lessons, and the foundation of all wholesome life, and that they may go out into the world with their eyes open, taught to realize in heart and conscience what is meant by the faith and fear of God.

That—so far as I, at least, can judge—underlies and explains all our eagerness on behalf of schools whose very *raison d'être* it is that such teaching should be given. Voices are astir which tell us that this sort of teaching is 'dogmatic,' and therefore unsuited to a child; that all you need in school-days is to learn what are most inadequately described as 'the principles of the Sermon on the Mount,' the duty of love and gentleness, of humility and self-control, and of upright honesty between man and

man; that the Bible, if taught at all, must be taught in a 'non-credal, non-theological, literary, ethical sense' only, and that to go beyond this is to violate the rights of conscience. Now there it is that, as I think, we are pulled up sharp by what our Blessed Lord Himself taught us as to the order and principle of vital truth. 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.' This is the *first*—yes, the *first* and great commandment. The second, vital as it is, is the fruit and not the root; it is second not first; and it is by obedience to the first that obedience to the second in the truest sense becomes possible. Apply it in what field you will—in the instruction of a little child, as truly as in the life of a grown man, or in the social progress of a Christian community—the order stands good. Let the little child, as its intelligence grows, learn to look upon its simple prayer to our Father who is in heaven as something that matters; let it come to feel what it means to belong, by Holy Baptism, to the society on earth of which the Lord Jesus is the living Head, and then its little efforts to be gentle, obedient, unselfish, will have their true power and their true meaning, and the fruit of these efforts will ripen in the true way. You may call that teaching theological dogma if you will. It is the way Christ and His Apostles taught when His Church was being planted upon earth and His message was changing the lives of men.

Then there is another field of concrete examples in which the order of Christ's two commandments is, I think, an urgently practical and significant matter for us all—the field of what we call 'philanthropic' work. I suppose it is literally true—it may even be a mere truism—to say that among the changes which have come over English life in the last few generations none is genuinely greater than the change in the degree of men's sympathy for human suffering. Stand before one of Hogarth's pictures—those pictures of which it has been said that whereas people 'look at' other men's pictures, they 'read' what Hogarth's pencil drew—say, for example, his picture of a lunatic ward in Bethlehem Hospital. Or, again, read the account given by John Howard or Elizabeth Fry (accounts in each case clear, vivid, and calm) of what was daily to be seen in English prisons down to the time of our own grandfathers. Or, again, listen (for we can almost do so) to one of the speeches which told the House of Commons in accurate statistical detail the particulars of a Bristol slave-ship on its voyage. What is it that surprises, bewilders you most? Not, I think, the fact that these awful things happened, but the equally indisputable fact that numbers of thoughtful, capable, kind-hearted, yes, and influential, English men and women knew all about them, and yet acquiesced, or more than acquiesced, in their continuance. That, to my mind at least, is the amazing, the almost incompre-

hensible, thing. And what brought about the change? Take the slave-trade story, for it closely concerns the history of this city of Bristol. The iniquities in all their hideous barbarity were known to, were described by, even such men as Edmund Burke and William Pitt. And the House of Commons listened (I quote Wilberforce's words) 'with a fastidious, well-bred lukewarmness,'* and refused to mend them. Then William Wilberforce made the cause his own. He had cared about it, as he has himself told us, for many years. 'As early,' he says, 'as the year 1780 I had been strongly interested for the West Indian slaves, and I had expressed my hope that I should redress the wrongs of those wretched beings.'† At that time, however, the religious enthusiasm which was afterwards to characterize his life had not been stirred. When he returned to the House of Commons in 1786, his whole being 'was attuned in a different key,' and the subject which had before interested his kindly heart, as it had interested Edmund Burke and many more, became a sacred trust committed to him, as he firmly believed, and constantly maintained, by the Lord his God. Then, by degrees, the fruit ripened, the power grew, the influence 'told,' and at length the victory came. The man had first become 'fit' for the great emprise because at the root of his

* 'Life,' vol. iii., p. 304 (ed. 1838).

† *Ibid.*, vol. i., pp. 147, 148.

being, pulsing life and force through every fibre, lay the love of God, inspiring heart and soul and mind, and bearing its inevitable fruit—the effective, indomitable love for his fellow-men. I do not know of any clearer, nobler object-lesson than is given by that story when studied in its fulness (I have but touched upon it now) as to the true significance of Christ's words, 'This—thou shalt love the Lord thy God—is the *first* and great commandment.' To every one of you who does not know it I would commend the story of the secret of those nineteen strenuous years. For we have access to the secret in a remarkable way. The very man to whose unremitting toil the result, under God, was due, that very man, in one of the most notable books in all the range of religious literature, has told us, in a long chapter of sustained and chastened eloquence, what must, in his judgment, be the underlying principle and motive if the work is to be rightly done. We might easily criticize his phrases had they been the utterance of a theorist. As the words of one of the most active workers who ever lived, they have an indisputable claim on our attention.

'True practical Christianity,' he says, 'consists in devoting the heart and life to God; in being supremely and habitually governed by a desire to know and a disposition to fulfil His will, and endeavouring under the influence of these motives to live to His glory. Where these essential requisites

are wanting, however amiable the character may be, however creditable and respectable among men, yet, as it possesses not the grand distinguishing essence, it must not be complimented with the name of Christianity. Men of real religion will do well to watch against this delusion. Let them particularly beware lest, setting out on right principles, they insensibly lose them in the course of their progress, lest, engaging originally in the business and bustle of the world from a sincere and earnest desire to promote the glory of God, their minds should become so heated and absorbed in the pursuit of their object as that the true motive of action should either altogether cease to be an habitual principle, or should at least lose much of its life and vigour. . . . The Christian's path is beset with dangers. On the one hand, he justly dreads an inactive and unprofitable life; on the other, he no less justly trembles for the loss of that spiritual-mindedness which is the very essence and power of his profession.' *

It was before the prowess of such a man—inspired by such a motive—yes, and just because he was inspired by such a motive—that the powers of wrong and cruelty went down.

So it has been—I could show it, if time allowed, from the mouths of John Howard, and Lord Shaftesbury, and Elizabeth Fry, and many more—so it has been with the amendment of our prisons, our asylums,

* 'Practical View,' chap. iv., sec. 4.

our factories, and our mines. So keenly has our modern sensibility been stirred, so obvious do the rights and wrongs nowadays appear to be, that we forget too often whence came the motive force, and how emphatically the effective care for our fellow-man has been shown to follow from and to be the fruit of the quiet self-surrender of the soul, the deliberate whole-hearted obedience to the Lord's first and great commandment, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God.'

I believe myself that even in our larger social problems, housing and sanitation and poor-laws, and the like, we should find (though less obviously) that the same principle held good, and this just because (speaking quite generally and in the rough) the men whose work, individual or corporate, will in the long run tell are those who consciously live and move and have their being in the presence of the larger realities which lie beyond our sight, or, to put it more summarily, the men who pray. Such a generalization must, of course, be rough and large, and subject to many obvious exceptions. But so qualified I think it is true. Are there any of us clergy who have not in our parishes marvelled now and then to find how wide and real has been the influence wielded by somebody whom we should ourselves have unhesitatingly catalogued among the ineffective and the inept? Is it always—is it usually—those who understand our problems best who turn out to be best

able to solve them? or does it depend more often upon a hidden power, unreckoned with and difficult to define, which is possessed in fullest measure by some of the least scientific and the most unassuming of our friends and fellow-workers? We do want our scientific investigators and tabulators and devisers of new experiments for solving world-old problems. If we are driven sometimes to speak with pardonable dislike of—

> 'Romney Leigh, who lives by diagrams,
> And crosses out the spontaneities
> Of all his individual personal life
> With formal universals. As if man
> Were set upon a high stool at a desk
> To keep God's books for Him in red and black,
> And feel by millions,' *

it would yet be the basest ingratitude to ignore or to decry the service which has been rendered to every thoughtful man or woman in the maze of our modern perplexities by the calm inquirer who will correlate or criticize our endeavours and bring light to bear upon our tangled web. What we have to see to is this, that no increase of knowledge, no matured orderliness of plan, shall bring with it a decrease in the glow of personal sympathy, or in the delicacy and gentleness of touch, or in the sensitiveness to human sin. For it is surely true to say that our growing sensitiveness to human sorrow may sometimes have blunted our sensitiveness to human sin,

* 'Aurora Leigh,' p. 116.

and in no way more certainly than by adhering to the order of Christ's two commandments can we insure our recognition of the truth—absolutely vital to the Christian faith—of sin and its significance.

Within the last few days the world has been enriched by the permanent memorial, drawn by a master-hand, of one of the most striking personalities which—in our own land at least—the recent centuries have seen. Whatever opinion any man may have formed about the changes and chances of Mr. Gladstone's eventful life, no reader of these illuminating volumes will, I imagine, be found to doubt the indomitable vigour of his religious faith. In a remarkable passage headed 'Religion the Mainspring,' the biographer has eloquently described that characteristic of the man. 'All his activities,' says Mr. Morley, 'were in his own mind one. This is the fundamental fact of Mr. Gladstone's history. Political life was only part of his religious life. It was religious motive that, through a thousand avenues and channels, stirred him and guided him in his whole conception of active social duty. . . . Life was to him, in all its aspects, an application of Christian teaching and example.'* When Mr. Gladstone himself records how the Bible had, at every crisis, been his stay, and recounts the very texts which, at special junctures in his earlier public life—the Oxford contest, his first Budget, the Crimean

* 'Life,' vol. i., pp. 200, 202.

War, and so on—had, as he says, 'come home to him as if borne on angels' wings,' it grows clear and ever clearer that he had made his own the principle that, for the Christian man, the love of God comes *first*, and the love of man is its outcome and its fruit. Among the most striking features of that faith, in the later years at least, are its simple strength, its unstudied reticence, and yet its readiness to find expression when utterance seemed to him to be right. I shall be surprised if fuller study of the story does not confirm one in the thought that here again we have a noteworthy example in a great man's life, of loyalty to the order of the two commandments, all the extraordinary versatility of his human service being simply, trustfully based upon the earlier elemental rule: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with heart, and soul, and mind.'

And so, brothers and sisters, I come back to that with which I began—'the first and great commandment'—as the only true basis of whatsoever may come after. And a Church Congress is, or ought to be, the very seed-plot in which that truth should strike its roots and grow. The very fact of our being here betokens our common interest in the things we are all of us trying to do in God's Name, and by the Holy Spirit's aid, for the bettering of our common life. May it perchance happen that we too readily take for granted what the old writers called 'the fundamentals,' as we pass on to the discussion

—wholesome and helpful—of what we are to do and how to do it? There is something which precedes what we are to do. It is what we are, as men and women, in our personal relation to our God. Find that to be amiss, and what can the rest, after all, be worth? May we rely upon it that this week in our debatings we shall bear ceaselessly in mind, for humiliation and for encouragement, which is 'the first and great commandment'? It is not untimely, I think, that we should ask ourselves that simple question to-day, and that the question should shape itself into a resolve, and the resolve into a prayer.

XII. THE SACRED BANNER*

Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His Name in vain.

EXODUS XX. 7.

THE Divine command—the third of Sinai's 'Ten Words'—has been familiar to every one of us from earliest childhood. No small number of us, I suppose, have in later years tried, in due course, to explain in day- and Sunday-school to successive generations of Christ's little ones the solemn and far-reaching meaning which it bears. May I this morning look with you at the phrase in a light perhaps rather different from that in which we commonly regard it? 'The Name of the Lord thy God' is to be treated reverently, not lightly. Invoke it—yes, and prize the privilege of doing so. But beware of handling it without deliberate responsible thought of what you thereby mean.

We talk ordinarily about that form of irreverence

* Opening of the Church Congress, Great Yarmouth, October 1, 1907.

which consists in slighting the Holy Name by making it, if nothing more, a mere meaningless adjunct to an asseveration in which we have no real thought of God at all. To most of us, gathered here for a Church Congress, that special temptation is not a serious peril. But there is another side. We may use the sacred Name with no sort of 'profanity' (in the usual sense of that word), and yet after a fashion which is fraught with danger not the less real because it is insidious and comes upon us unawares. Nay, a Church Congress and its surroundings offer an occasion, and for good people the occasions are abundant, when they may slip easily and unintentionally into the error, and the error may become a sin. 'Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain.' The Hebrew word translated 'take' has sometimes been connected by commentators with the solemn phrase which refers to Jehovah's Name as the banner or standard under which we advance to work or to fight. It was under that standard that Moses and Joshua secured the first victory of the Lord's people in the earliest beginning of their national life, and recorded it in the name 'Jehovah Nissi'—the Lord my banner. Not dissimilarly the Psalmist, many centuries afterwards, in that jubilant little hymn, the Twentieth Psalm, with its strophe and anti-strophe, the people's prayer and the ruler's trust, uses the phrase, 'In the Name of our God will we set up our banners.'

No single thought is more fundamentally certain, more buoyantly, hopefully, triumphantly ours, as the baptized children, the enlisted soldiers and servants of Christ, pledged 'manfully to fight under His banner,' than the glad truth that we can count upon and claim His leadership in the daily work of ordinary life as well as in its crisis hours. Which of us in our weakness and waywardness could stand for a single day firm to our trust, in face of our anxieties and our perplexities and our lamentable failures, were it not for the clear assurance that we can absolutely count upon that Personal guidance and presence which He has promised for 'all the days'? He promised it to those who will take Him at His word, who will frankly and loyally receive Him as their Lord 'who liveth and was dead'; their Lord who became man here on earth and died upon the cross to save us from our sins, who rose again to assure us of immortality, who ever liveth to make intercession for us, and who does and will refresh and invigorate us on the dusty roadway of ordinary life by the gifts of the Holy Ghost the Comforter, 'the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, of Counsel and Strength.' In that we stand. In that 'Name which is above every name' we expect to conquer, be the onslaught—yes, or the ambush—what it may.

Once be sure that the issue is clearly set, the issue between God's will and the world's, between Christ our living Lord and Christ's foes, and then—why

then no enthusiasm of absolute unhesitating loyalty and confidence can be misplaced. We must not, we dare not, let that banner, His banner, go down or droop in our keeping—no, not for an hour. It was in the irresistible power of that absolute loyalty that the martyrs of Italy or Africa or Gaul in early centuries of the faith, a Lawrence, a Cyprian, a Blandina, or the dauntless band of Jesuit missionaries in Canadian backwoods two hundred years ago, a Goupil, or a Brebeuf, or a Daniel, or the pioneers of Christ in modern days, a Henry Martyn, or a Coleridge Patteson, or the simple, faithful, unlettered men and women of Uganda or China, within the memory of us all, won the day for Him. Not in vain they upbore His banner. His Name was 'not a vain thing for them—it was their life.'

It is probably impossible for us ordinary twentieth-century Church-people in a Christian land to know what strength we should be enabled to show were we subjected to a test such as those martyrs had to face. Perhaps we are as likely to underrate as to overrate the degree of courage which, by God the Holy Spirit's grace, would be possible, even for very prosaic Christian people, if the issue were thus absolutely clear between loyalty and treason to our Lord —say, as clear as when it turned upon the sprinkling of heathen incense or upon cursing the Redeemer's Name. We cannot speak positively as to what they would do because the facts are so utterly different.

We may be practically sure that no one in this church to-day is likely ever to be confronted with the fearfully plain alternative—a martyr's death or the flat denial of the Christian's Lord. That plain, blunt, rough-and-ready test or temptation has ceased to exist—in Europe at all events. A quite different condition of things has prevailed for centuries, and has naturally brought with it quite a different set of temptations. Perplexity, bewilderment, vagueness have long taken the place of the once categorical 'yes' or 'no.' And this, be it noted, has been steadily growing, at least in England and other lands of tolerance and freedom, for many generations. Farther and farther do we pass away from the spirit which once animated rulers, with coercive power, to call for some unhesitating 'yes' or 'no,' now in one particular, now in another, in the region of religious belief.

And what follows? From the modern spirit comes a modern set of temptations. They are strong and varied, and we of to-day are liable to be beset by them. There is no longer—people are apt very plausibly to say—there is no longer any such obvious dividing line as there once was. Those, they say, were blunt, rude days, in which a man had either to be a loyal adherent or an avowed opponent of the definite orthodox Christian Creed. Nowadays it is all different. So many good people are neither. The idea of avowedly persecuting anybody for his

Christian opinions is long out of date among us. But many of our friends who would regard such persecution with abhorrence are, on the other hand, very far from themselves claiming Jesus Christ the Son of God as their Divine Lord, to whom they can and do conscientiously pray and teach their children to pray. And so, by degrees, the dividing line comes to be blurred or obliterated, and with the perplexities there grows up an acquiescence which honestly claims to be merely broad-minded and large-hearted in seeing no very vital difference between a man's believing the definite Christian faith and his ignoring it.

Now, is that not a fairly true account of the frequent environment of educated English social life in its religious aspect? If so, we can see that there has merely been substituted a new sort of test or temptation instead of the former one. 'Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain.' The temptation comes in two different ways. Have we a right to claim the title and privileges of Christian believers in the Lord God if we are ceasing firmly and courageously and openly to defend His banner—the banner under which we were enlisted in Baptism—from those who do it wrong? If we think that nothing in the realm of belief matters very much, it is not likely that we shall be particularly brave or outspoken in its defence. Doubtless we would not, any of us, knowingly betray the citadel

or renounce allegiance to its Lord, but we may easily fail in the output of such active service as would strengthen its walls or extend His rule. Therein lies, then, one large possibility of a breach of the Third Commandment. To claim, as a Christian, the 'holy sanction' of our Redeemer's Name — and presumably everyone attending a Church Congress does at least that—means, or ought to mean, a quite deliberate admission of the demands, sometimes the exacting demands, to which such membership in His society makes us liable.

Tolerance and broad-mindedness may be predicated, perhaps truly and justifiably, of our attitude towards other men's opinions, but the words have, surely, little or no meaning with respect to our own beliefs; and if, by some confusion or haziness of thought, we fondly take credit to ourselves for making such words describe our personal beliefs, we may be very easily carrying the sacred banner lightly and taking God's Holy Name in vain. Tolerance, rightly understood, means a respect for freedom of opinion in others. We must take care that it does not set up a standard of its own as applied to ourselves, and establish what has been called 'an orthodoxy of latitudinarianism which may not be spoken against.' The Church of Christ has been put in trust with a sacred deposit of essential truth which God has in Jesus Christ revealed to man, and no respect for other people's opinions, much less any

mere good-natured and almost careless kindliness, will justify us in tampering with that deposit or belittling its unique authority. To those who claim an absolutely unfettered and irresponsible freedom of speculation, the Church of Christ will often seem intolerant, because, so far as the Church itself is concerned, the holding of its accepted Creed denies or limits that irresponsible claim. Of those who, as Churchmen, make such a claim, a French thinker has well said, 'They confuse the right of the individual to be free with the duty of the institution to be something.'*

If the temptation which I have described be, in matters of faith, one of the first to which we are exposed, amid the confusion and the rivalries of modern opinion, there is, as always, a corresponding temptation of the directly opposite kind. We are on our guard against lightly forgetting the immense import of the claim which Christ makes upon all who bear His Name. Yes, but we must be not less sternly on our guard against too ready an appropriation of that sacred banner and its sanctions, on behalf of every honest opinion which we may any of us form in matters of Christian faith or Christian usage. There is more than one way in which genuinely religious people can take the Name of the Lord their God in vain.

A good man forms some religious opinion definitely

* See Creighton, 'Persecution and Tolerance,' p. 127.

and, for him, decisively. He has thought over the matter, and has discussed it with others, and the outcome seems to him to be clear. It may be on a point of what he deems Catholic order, or Sacramental efficacy or usage, or Evangelical soundness, or the interpretation of the Bible. He is eager, rightly eager, in its defence, and there comes into play the natural and reasonable instinct and resolve to obtain for his opinion the weightiest available support and to place it upon the highest attainable level of authority. Speedily, or at all events with growing assurance, he becomes convinced that those who differ from him are fundamentally and vitally wrong, nay, that the very truth of God is at stake in the contest he is waging for the doctrine, or the interpretation, or the usage, which he has made his own. Is such a controversialist not in danger of, inadvertently and yet really, taking in vain the Name of the Lord his God? The experience of Church history seems to tell us that he is. The gravest and most formidable action that religious men can take is the actual persecution of their opponents. And we have our Master's own reminder that we are not to regard even the persecutor as necessarily inspired with evil motive. 'It shall come to pass that whoso killeth you will think that he doeth God service.' And yet, when the opposition to us falls very far short of that, how apt a keen man is to think of his opponent as being not mistaken

only, but malicious or wrong-spirited as well. It has been acutely pointed out that very often in the history of controversy the persecuting spirit—and now that the faggot or the rack are long out of date the same thing applies to the denunciatory spirit—has behind it a strange half-conscious hesitancy as to the immutable truth of its own opinions. Do you remember the striking scene in Tennyson's 'Queen Mary,' where Pole and Gardiner discuss the rightfulness and wrongfulness of Smithfield fires? The Cardinal urges that—

> 'To persecute is furthermore
> No perfect witness of a perfect faith
> In him that persecutes. When men are tossed
> On tides of strange opinion, and not sure
> Of their own selves, they are wroth with their own selves
> And thence with others. Then who lights the faggot?
> Not the full faith. No, but the lurking doubt.'

Has that thought no suggestiveness for any of us in days when Smithfield fires would be an impossible anachronism? But, apart from that, though the methods of Dominic and Torquemada may seem to us of the twentieth century inconceivable, is it certain that the underlying spirit which in those days and those surroundings prompted such methods has completely disappeared? It is a spirit which needs much exorcism. It has been vigorously alive in England and Scotland in far more recent times. John Milton—foremost, I suppose, among English-

men in the eloquence of his advocacy of religious liberty and tolerance—felt no apparent scruple or doubt in describing his controversial opponents as fighting against God, and in speaking of himself and his friends as indisputably the representatives of God's immutable will. The things, he says, which were done by his own party in Church and State 'almost open their voice themselves and proclaim the presence of God throughout. . . . Following Him as our guide, and adoring the impresses of His Divine power manifested upon all occasions, we went on in no obscure but an illustrious passage pointed out and made plain to us by God Himself.'*

Or see the same spirit notably exemplified among the Covenanters north of the Tweed. In the year 1741, George Whitefield, then at the zenith of his power as a preacher and evangelist, was invited to Scotland by the famous brothers Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine, that he might preach the Gospel there also. He went, and in Scotland, as in England, the multitude hung upon his words. At Cambuslang 'the whole population hearkened to him.' Suspicions, however, were kindled, and Whitefield, in a well-known letter, has recounted how a special presbytery was formed 'to discourse and set me right about the matter of Church government and the Solemn League and Covenant.' He demurred, and then, to quote his letter, 'one, much warmer than the rest,

* Preface to the 'Defence of the People of England.'

immediately replied that no indulgence was to be shown me. . . . I told him I had never yet made the Solemn League and Covenant the object of my study, being too busy about matters, as I judged, of greater importance. Several replied that every pin of the tabernacle was precious. . . . I was required to preach only for them till I had further light. I asked, why only for them? Mr. Ralph Erskine said "They were the Lord's people." I asked whether there were no other Lord's people but themselves.' An open breach followed. They appointed throughout the whole community a day of fasting and humiliation for the countenance given to Whitefield, and for 'the system of delusion attending the present awful work on the bodies and spirits of men going on at Cambuslang.' Soon there appeared a 'Declaration, Protestation, and Testimony of the suffering remnant of the anti-Popish, anti-Lutheran, anti-Erastian, anti-Prelatic, anti-Whitefieldian, anti-Sectarian, true Presbyterian Church of Christ in Scotland, against George Whitefield and his encouragers.' Never was there a more outspoken endeavour to appropriate to a little section of the Church of Christ the exclusive right to go forward under the sacred banner of the Divine Name.

Do you say that those were men of a narrow, Puritan temper, and that Churchmen of our day are not tempted thus lightly to invoke against those who

honestly differ from them in Christian controversy the sanction of God's holy Name? Are we sure of that? A little study of the abundant literature which saw the light just forty years ago in our own Church in solemn protest against the writings, exegetical and other, of certain Anglican theologians, would furnish notable examples to the contrary. Nay, would it be quite impossible to find phraseology of a clearly similar sort—or, shall I say, claims of a clearly similar sort—put forth with varying degrees of boldness in the delicate and difficult controversies, educational and other, of the last two or three years?

Most wisely and rightly we emphasize the sacred gravity of the issues which those controversies raise for us and for our children. It is that which makes us care so greatly that they shall not, if we can avert it, be settled upon mistaken lines. But that anxiety is compatible with a vivid recollection that in such controversy we are necessarily walking upon dangerous ground, and that there is need of reverent care as we handle questions of debate which are at once so intensely sacred in their character and issues and so perilously explosive in their ingredients. Never are we more liable than in such controversial hours to be tempted to a biassed, a narrow, a one-sided view of deep and holy things, and possibly even led to take the sacred Name in vain.

It has been well said that the desire of every man to have his own way becomes all the stronger when

he knows that his way is a good way. It is appallingly easy to cover this natural desire with a fair appearance, and to claim as from God authority which He has not conferred, and to misapply Scripture in justification of such a claim. Nay, is it not true that even personal resentment may sometimes to him who cherishes it take the colour of a holy zeal for the common good, or the patriotic care for the furtherance of a noble cause?

The danger is, I suppose, greatest when we reach the border or cross the border of what is commonly called the realm of conscience. It is an interesting and suggestive subject of inquiry why, during the last two decades, so much more has been heard than had been heard for generations about conscientious difficulties and scruples and objections of all sorts in our municipal and religious life. It certainly cannot be ascribed to any novel or increased harshness or callousness in the administration of our laws. The tendency, I suppose, has been markedly the other way. Laws about education, about the burial of the dead, about the incidence of tithe, about vaccination, about the taking of oaths and affirmations in court or in Parliament, have one after another been modified or repealed on purpose to meet such difficulties in the most considerate way. Yet the scruples and the sensitiveness remain, and find more frequent utterance than before. Rather, I imagine, must we attribute the change to a wider feeling—in many

respects most wholesome—in favour of free speech generally. 'Our generation,' people say, 'is much more cosmopolitan in its interests, it has much more intellectual curiosity, its democratic institutions and the growth of the Press necessitate a larger freedom of discussion.'

All this gives opportunity, far more readily than heretofore, for the easy raising of objections and criticism either of men or of the enactments and administration of the law. Add to this a palpable desire on the part of rulers and magistrates to avoid even the appearance of severity or unfair coercion, and it is obvious that the field is ready tilled for the growth, the development, and the fruitful utterance of sensitive or even hyper-sensitive scruples on the part of those who dislike the imposition or continuance of some particular obligation or restraint.

As we have already seen, there is a real solace, and even a grave satisfaction, in being able to claim for these scruples all the dignity of a loyal adherence to conscientious principle. And the claim so to do may sometimes—yes, sometimes—be right and just. He must be a strange student of history who would deny that occasions do arise, in the life of every country and of every faith, when the individual citizen must judge and act for himself at the sole bidding of his conscience, inspired and directed by the Lord his God. To deny it would be to slight some of the noblest men and worthiest deeds in the

story of Christendom. Nor is England behindhand in examples—examples sometimes as inspiring as they are pathetic. Even when we find ourselves unable to appreciate the adequacy of the cause, such men, we feel, had in no sense taken in vain the Name of the Lord their God. Many of us, I imagine, have felt that the most genuinely noteworthy of all cases are those in which the protester or resister is at the same time upholding the reverend majesty of the law. To take a single example. Picture the scene presented to the citizens of London in 1662, when Thomas Ellwood and his Quaker companions, imprisoned most literally for conscience' sake, marched quietly, without escort or guard from one prison to another, as they were bidden, evincing thereby their reverence for the dignity of the law, even while they bore what they deemed a necessary testimony for conscience' sake:

'We took our bundles on our shoulders' (Ellwood tells us in his Diary) 'and walked two and two abreast through the Old Bailey into Fleet Street, and so to the Old Bridewell. And it being about the middle of the afternoon, and the streets pretty full of people, both the shopkeepers at their doors and passengers in the way would stop us and ask us what we were and whither we were going. And when we told them we were prisoners going from one prison to another, "What," said they, "without a keeper?" "No," said we, "for our word which

we have given is our keeper." Some thereupon would advise us not to go to prison, but to go home. But we told them we could not do so. We could suffer for our testimony, but could not fly from it. I do not remember we had any abuse offered us.'

I do not refer to that incident, almost commonplace in its character two centuries and a half ago, as possessing any real similarity to the conditions of a day when we have learned to understand aright what religious tolerance means, and genuinely, and even jealously, to respect every such conscientious scruple as can be reconciled with the orderliness of corporate life and legislation. I mention it as a reminder of the stages by which we have grown to the possession of our present-day liberties, and of the terrible responsibility of any such action as would tend to substitute the mere self-will of a few for the mutual loyalty and self-surrender which inheres of necessity in the national life of a Christian people.

Is it possible, think you—and no assembly can be better qualified than this to weigh the question—is it possible that the old-fashioned reverence for law and order, as such—law and order shown forth in things Divine and human, in Nature and in national life—has somewhat waned amongst us, and not least among earnestly religious men? Does the sublime peroration of Richard Hooker's First Book ring out for people still with the power which, as we know, it

once wielded in English life? Let me recall to you the incomparable words:

'Of law there can be no less acknowledged than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world: all things in heaven and earth do her homage, the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempted from her power; both angels and men, and creatures of what condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all with uniform consent admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy.'

If the thought which underlies Hooker's words—or St. Paul's thought of the civil power as itself the ordinance of God, to which we are to be subject (note his phrase) 'for conscience' sake'—has indeed grown weaker in its hold upon the words and acts of Englishmen, it is time for us to pause and consider our ways. If this change has further come about at the very time when other influences are in Church matters tending to develop among High Churchmen and Low Churchmen alike an ultra-Protestant individualism which belittles all authority, ancient or modern, outside the dicta of a chosen clique of like-minded men, then the time has indeed come for a careful testing of our 'fundamentals,' lest without really intending it, we be somehow taking the Name of the Lord our God in vain.

Corruptio optimi pessima. It is just because of

the grandeur of our privilege, the privilege of claiming His leadership for life and word, that we are in perilous plight if we invoke that Divine sanction, and claim the banner of that holy Name for something less, something lower, something which is, ever at its best, more narrowly partisan than what He has even promised to bless or guide. There are great things and small, great issues and small, in our religious life. There are mighty and unchallengeable verities, the things which cannot be shaken, and there are pious and reasonable opinions, and devout and wholesome usages which stand upon a humbler level, and are neither unchallengeable nor unchallenged. Do not, I pray you, either in Congress debates or in the life of every day, confuse the two kinds of verities, or mistake the one for the other. Some forty years ago one of the greatest of modern theologians, Dr. Döllinger, presided in a great Church Conference at Munich:

'How often,' he said, 'in the reading of our ecclesiastical journals and controversial writings are we reminded of the truth of the saying: "Qui pauca considerat facile pronunciat?" . . . It would be well for us,' he continues, 'if we could always remember that no theologian has the right to give out a mere theological opinion or the doctrine of a particular school as an article of faith sanctioned by the Church. The great scholastic theologians maintained that it was not less heretical to declare that

to be an article of faith which was not *de fide* than to deny an article of faith altogether.'

The warning is needed in days like these—is specially needed, perhaps, on occasions such as this. But beneath and behind these minor differences which sunder us—differences dependent largely upon varying temperament, and often upon sheer misunderstandings and mistakes—lie the mighty basal truths whereon we all of us take our stand.

Has it not been a common experience in Christian life that as men draw near and nearer to Christ they feel themselves drawn closer also towards their theological opponents? At the end of life, when a man looks back calmly, he is apt to find, like Richard Baxter, that he exaggerated in some things, that in others he mistook party spirit for a love of truth. Perhaps he had not sufficient consideration for others, or he stated the truth itself in a way that was sure to give offence. The fundamental truths cannot partake of the passing stir. They do not change even with the largest revolutions of human things. They are in eternity, and the true image of them on earth is not the movement on the surface of the waters, but the depths of the silent sea.*

A Church Congress is gathered deliberately and avowedly in the Name which is above every name. We admit, or rather we profess as the very groundwork of all our debatings, His presence and His

* See Jowett's 'Epistle to the Romans,' ii. 394.

governance in the affairs of men. We are going to talk this week about the bearing of His life, His message, and the ministry of His Word and Sacraments upon the toils and perplexities, the books, the industries, the common tasks, national and municipal and domestic, which go to the making of a people's daily life. Not one thing that concerns the bettering of our towns and villages, or the purifying of our homes, or the lightening of human sorrows, lies outside the gentle dominance of the Saviour's love. Nothing is secular, except sin. And it is because we are sure of that that we have no doubt or hesitancy in the claim we make that He is Himself in the midst of us now, and that in these our deliberations God the Holy Spirit will indeed guide us, together and separately, into all the truth. Therefore, we speak out in quiet trustfulness. Therefore, we bid men go forward with buoyant hope. In the Name of our God here, this week in Yarmouth, in the Name of our God will we set up our banners.

XIII. THE VISION OF GOD*

Where there is no vision, the people perish.

PROVERBS XXIX. 18.

THE words would anywhere arrest attention. They become positively startling when we note the uncongenial surroundings in the midst of which they spring to light. Whole chapters are here of what may seem to us at times an almost arid collection of shrewd maxims and wise moral apophthegms based on a wide experience of the facts of nature and of human life, maxims just and reasonable rather than what we should call inspiring or devout. And of a sudden, out of the midst of all that, there flashes forth this call for something different, something higher—a vision of the Faculty Divine, without which morality may pass into worldly prudence or degenerate into casuistry. In the prophet and his work—the wise man seems suddenly to exclaim—lies the condition of a people's blessedness and

* Opening of the Church Congress, Swansea, October 5, 1909.

strength. 'Where there is no vision, the people perish'—more literally, 'cast off restraint,' or, as we should expressively say, 'go to pieces.'

'Where there is no vision.' It is the word used for the revelation given to the Prophets as to God's will and purpose in a people's life. Isaiah had it, and Amos, and the noblest of the Psalmists. The darkest time in the history of Israel had been when there was 'no open vision,' when no great teacher was reminding a wayward people of the splendid purpose, the ennobling possibilities, of their Divinely-guided life. It is a danger which may come, and has come often, to a people in times of apathy and torpor and decay. But not then only. It is a peril which belongs scarcely less to times of stir and restless 'busyness' and change—a peril which a Church, quite as surely as a nation, may sometimes have to face, and by the grace of God to conquer or avert. 'In all time of our tribulation.' Yes; but something more: 'In all time of our wealth'—wealth of work and workers, wealth of plans and activities. In all time of our wealth, 'Good Lord, deliver us' from the numbing lack of vision which may harden and deaden and make unprofitable both the workers and the work.

Let me give a few examples of what I mean. Take them from the facts of to-day—the facts which of necessity come to the fore in a Church Congress. It is the merest truism to say that our activities in

every branch of Church life have been quadrupled—possibly decupled—within the lifetime of many of us. Look at the things tentatively, timidly suggested in the Church Congresses of the early seventies, and compare them with what happens in town and country now. The gain in a score of directions is such as to make us thank God for it daily when we say our prayers. And these activities are not fanciful or petty. They are neither frothy nor sentimental. They are not—these clubs and guilds and corps and gatherings—bits of ecclesiastical pedantry. They are robust and practical and healthy. And yet somehow or other the net outcome—when we look out on English life as a whole—is a good deal less than we should have expected it to be. Think of the untold devotion which is expended day by day by a vast company of Christian men and women in the grandest of all duties—the service of the little children in our schools, and pre-eminently in our Church schools. The whole nation is enriched by a contribution so eager, so persistent, so self-sacrificing, to the stock of what we call public service. Is the outcome, the fruit as seen in the grown-up life or the growing-up life of those who have been children in those schools, quite as great as we should have expected it to be? I do not, I hope, underrate the actual fruit. Perhaps it is to be seen in the absence of much evil which would otherwise have been there; and we may have been unreason-

ably, though surely not un-Christianly, sanguine if we expected more. But I own that if I had watched, say in some unfamiliar land which I was visiting, that ceaseless output of zeal and love, I should have expected a wider and more obvious, and, so to speak, a more assertive and unchallengeable evidence of direct result in the streets and villages of England or among our emigrants who cross the sea.

Or, again, who will attempt to estimate what our great town parishes owe to the quiet, persistent, systematic prayers offered by the little groups of two or three who gather at the quiet service on a week-day evening in the mission chapel or room, which is nowadays so essential a part of the ordinary machinery or equipment of a town parish that people will scarce believe you if you remind them that such buildings, in their present form at least, were unknown, literally unknown, half a century ago? To scarcely any spots in England more fitly than to those unobtrusive little buildings can we apply the term 'holy ground.' But to what extent are these sacred spots really centres of sturdy force in the strife against what is amiss or stagnant in the teeming streets all round? How far have they fulfilled the hopes which, as a matter of fact, found expression when they began to struggle into being a couple of generations ago? And, at the best, what are they really, these churches and chapels, even the larger ones, among the people who ought, as we think, to

want them and to throng them? In scores of parishes where devout men and women are straining every nerve to make religion a practical and a helpful thing the result as regards churchgoing is the same. Let me quote the words of an evidently keen observer, both shrewd and reverent: 'Great efforts expended. A moderate congregation formed, but the bulk of the people, so far as outward observances go, untouched. In other words, a state of things which, if the Church were simply organizing missions in a heathen land, would not be unhopeful, but would certainly not suggest to anybody that the mission stage was over, and that the land had been won to the Cross.' You see, for example, on the notice-board of a little church in a crowded neighbourhood that there is a weekday service at such an hour, and it would suggest to an uninformed and observant visitor, in a vague sort of a way, a participation by the parish generally in religious worship. But what does happen? 'The church is in a back street, where, in the evening, children scream and play, and men lounge and smoke. The doors are opened. A little bell goes ting, ting, ting. A few women glide in quietly to service, and then disperse as quietly. The children go on screaming and playing, and the men go on lounging and smoking, and that means of influencing the parish, of rallying its Christian strength for the fight against evil, is over until next time, when it will be repeated again.' A depressing

picture—a picture which omits, I think, something very real which is there all the while—yet a picture which surely challenges us to some unquiet thought. Does the outcome of so much honest and devoted endeavour realize or answer to what we ought rightly and reasonably to have expected? If not, why not? And so I think we might run on through many fields of true-hearted effort by some of the most devoted servants of our Master to be found in England—to be found, many of them, in this Church Congress. Bands of Hope, boys' clubs, girls' clubs, Sunday-schools—fruitful in their measure every one. But dare we say fruitful in reasonable proportion to the devotion bestowed and the prayers offered? I trow not.

Turn similarly to another subject of present-day interest and action. The force of any living, throbbing part of the Church of Christ depends in large measure upon the carefulness and purity of what is there planned and taught and done in regard to the Church's worship of her Lord. For that worship, and for all that surrounds the active ministry of Word and Sacrament, we must have rules—and those rules must be known and cared for. And yet it is possible—will anyone doubt or deny it?—so to dwell upon, so to handle and rehandle, those rules and the usages which they prescribe as to make them grow into a different place from that which is rightly theirs. Men may, all unconsciously, so handle and at last so reverence them that they become, it is

hardly too much to say, the end and not the means. Nobody intends that that should happen. It is all done with the best possible purpose: a devout care for reverence; a scrupulous regard that purity of doctrine shall not—by word or symbol—be imperilled; a cultivated instinct for whatsover is lovely and of good report; and yet, with all this, a something springing up in and around the rules which impairs the simpler, more uplifting vision of what lies behind and beyond.

And once more. Mark present-day controversies, and what they come to. Most of us, I suppose, are apt sometimes to look and speak with a superciliousness bordering on contempt about the disputations upon which so much clerical time and ink are spent, or at least about those of them in which we are taking no part. That contempt is generally dangerous, and is sometimes most unfair. Is it too much to say that to controversy—the controversy of thoughtful and forceful men—we owe the Canon of Scripture, the balanced security of our Creeds and formularies, the status of our living authorities, legislative, administrative, and judicial, the system of regulated interaction in the obligations of Church and State, and a whole group of the conditions which make everyday life go smoothly? For citizens or for Churchmen who are free to speak and act controversy is not merely inevitable—it is wholesome and right. But it must keep its place.

It must not, for most people at least, absorb or dominate the life. Athanasius and Luther are, and ought to be, very rare men. It must not be suffered to embitter our relationships or to engender a wrong spirit. And it can—we know it too well—it can do that. It can, perhaps, do it above all when the controversy turns upon something in the nation's life as well as in the Church's life, when a partisan political dye or possibly a political venom is infused into and discolours what ought to be the honest emulation of Christian men to arrive at the wisest and best conditions for carrying on the Master's work in a Christian country.

The plodding work which is and must be ours as week follows week; the rules and ordinances which guide and stimulate and control the ministry of Word and Sacrament; the strenuous interchange of thought and the 'hammering out' of knowledge, which issue in our heritage of faith both new and old—we have glanced at each of these. They are essential to our life, but they are not the life itself.

'Where there is no vision, the people perish.' If the vision be not there, the work, the rules, the disputations will be, not hollow and worthless perhaps, but cramped, impoverished, uninspired. The vision of God and of His purpose for us men. What are all those things at their best but means to that end, that purpose of His? It is to become ours. And it can. Bishop Butler, more than a century and a half

ago, warned us, in his fine phrase, against 'shortness of thought'—thought, that is, which stretches only a little way or covers only what we see at the moment. I am persuaded that in the absorbing stress of the daily work into which we are throwing our whole hearts this danger of 'shortness of thought' becomes terribly real. Give to that work every ounce of strength and wisdom and love that you can put into it. But all the while look ahead and beyond. First at the outcome, or what ought to be the outcome, of it in the fuller, worthier life which, by God's help, we are set to bring to pass and make prevalent in the land we love. And then at something larger, worthier still, something beyond what we, with our finite horizon, can yet measure—the Divine purpose whereto every bit of present effort should be somehow tending:

'Study, my friends,
What a man's work comes to! So he plans it,
Performs it, perfects it, makes amends
For the toiling and moiling, and then, *sic transit!*
Happier the thrifty blind-folk labour,
With upturned eye while the hand is busy,
Not sidling a glance at the coin of their neighbour!
'Tis looking downward that makes one dizzy.' *

My brothers, no smaller purpose, however clearly seen, will do:

'The race of Man
Receives life in parts to live in a whole
And grow here according to God's clear plan.'†

* Browning, 'Old Pictures in Florence,' X. † *Ibid.*, XIV.

The shrewdest and clearest thinker about present-day life and its problems may be quite without the vision which gives a different character to it all. Do you remember Fitzgerald's question as he and Tennyson stood together before a line of marble busts wherein Dante and Goethe had been placed side by side—'What is it which is present in Dante's face and absent from Goethe's?' and Tennyson's curt reply, 'The Divine?'

Turn your thoughts to the life of our Blessed Lord upon earth. One careful student after another has bid us notice, as a fact inexplicable on ordinary lines, that His horizon had no local or contemporary bounds.

Forty years ago Professor Goldwin Smith, in a notable lecture,* called on Christian men to realize how the picture which the Gospel records give of our Divine Master's earthly life is absolutely free from any of the limitations which have circumscribed the vision or the powers of even the greatest of the world's leaders. He describes the picture as showing 'the essence of man's moral nature, clothed with a personality so vivid as to excite through all ages the most intense affection, yet divested of all those peculiar characteristics, the accidents of place and time, by which human personalities are marked;' and he adds, 'What other notion than this can philosophy form of Divinity manifest on earth?'

* 'On the Study of History,' Oxford, 1865.

Or, to put it in another way, it is surely with reverence and godly fear that we ponder on the words in which He gave expression to the far-off vision which He saw of the times of difficulty and perplexity wherein we are living now. His gaze ranged onward through and beyond the days of His earthly life—through and beyond the years of scorn and then of persecution which His early followers should know—through and beyond the times of universal reception and of what men called success—on and on into these modern times of ours—a vision of the ulterior result of victory and success, a vision of the new perils which would come when men would find it worth while to pay homage to a prosperous and flourishing religion, and such homage and discipleship should lose its worth, for lack of the spirit, the Vision which could alone uplift it all. One almost dreads to quote the grave, sad words—

'Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and in Thy name cast out devils, and in Thy name done many wonderful works?'

Many wonderful works, gifts of eloquence and powers of mind, apparent in the teeming activities of a Christian Church—a Christian land. 'And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you.' Why? Because of a secret, subtle shallowness in the aim and the spirit with which the work, eager as it is, is being done—because, in short, it lacks the sacred

Vision—the realization of the personal presence of the Lord, and of our hourly dependence upon Him, and without that vision—that revelation to teachers and to taught—the fire flickers and fails, and it may even be—God in His mercy avert it!—that under all this seeming show of life 'the people perish.'

'Where there is no vision.' The lesson is writ large on the page of human history. I wish some writer would adequately expand and expound the story of the rise and fall of leaders—and sometimes of peoples—in proportion as they had and held to the power of such vision as carried them beyond the easy range of the daily round of work and duty. There would emerge, I think, the splendid truth that the God-given vision has in itself a power which nothing else on earth has of conquering wrong, of repairing error, of stimulating the down-hearted, of rallying the humble, scattered forces of good. Ancient Greece, for all the brilliance and beauty which later ages and other lands have striven in vain to rival, fell irrevocably to pieces before the stronger foe just for want of that vision based on anything that could endure. Even Rome, with its splendid ideals of order and justice, of civic duty and patriotism, crumbled into impotence at last before barbaric foes because she had no vision to fall back upon save the memories and examples of past greatness, fell because her well-worn rules and even her stately philosophies had, in such a time of trial and of travail, no power

to vivify and to recreate.* 'Where there is no vision, the people perish.' And therein, notwithstanding all our lamentable failures, notwithstanding the blunders and the bigotries, nay, the cruelties and the tyrannies which stain the records of the Church's life—therein lies for us the difference between our heritage and theirs. The God-given vision inspires beyond all doubt or questioning an unconquerable hope. It did it long ago, it does it still. There is in it—there always was—a moral spring and vitality and force which has nothing like it elsewhere. What that vision, that revelation, brought within the reach of men quietly won its way, and, blots and failures notwithstanding, it is winning its way still, and you and I are set here on earth—are gathered this week in Swansea—to further it, to make that holy cause, in the strength of our living Lord, prevail, even among those who have no notion whence the influence comes and what is keeping it steadily aflame. The outcome will perhaps come slowly. It may well be that we have to learn patience, hurried, as we are, to and fro by the inevitable tumult of modern life. But the Vision is there, and it is sure. God shows it to the waiting soul. 'It is still,' we have been nobly taught,† 'it is still through long watching that at last the opportunity is found for mastering the truth towards which

* *Cf.* Dean Church, 'The Gifts of Civilization,' Lecture II.

† Westcott, 'Social Aspects of Christianity,' p. 201.

our hopes have been turned. . . . It is still by silent ponderings, in the solitude of the inner chamber, or in the solitude of the crowd, that we learn the lesson of communing with God. . . . We cannot remove the conditions under which our work is to be done, but we can transform them. They are the elements out of which we must build the temples wherein we serve.'

Do those thoughts seem to any of us misty and unpractical and less robust than what we want? Perhaps they do. I may be wrong; but I think it is specially difficult for us in days so noisy and dusty as our own to appreciate the need of the quiet vision and to 'let Patience have her perfect work.' I have no kind of doubt that it is one of our foremost needs. The vision should show us amidst our most serviceable and righteous activities whereunto all this ought to grow, and what, after all, it is to do. The definite mending of the world's wrong things—the definite winning over of the people of our land and other lands unto a clearer and more thoughtful allegiance to our Lord, the filling of our places, when we have gone, by men and women worthier of the great heritage than we have shown ourselves to be. But for the doing of all that we must be ourselves aflame, and it is the vision of God which can awake the glow. The vision not of His purpose only, but of Himself, the Lord in Whose Name, in Whose cause we are gathered here, Himself alive and present with us now. Happy the man to whom

there comes that 'uncovering of the ear' to His message, that revelation or vision of His presence; he who shall

> 'Gaze one moment on the Face, Whose beauty
> Wakes the world's great hymn;
> Feel it one unutterable moment
> Bent in love o'er him;
> In that look feel heaven, earth, men, and angels
> Distant grow and dim;
> In that look feel heaven, earth, men, and angels
> Nearer grow through Him.'*

And this vision, in the quiet solemnity of the soul's inmost life, is no unpractical thing. Remember for what purpose it is that He vouchsafes to us the vision. It is that we may be more fit for the active, the ungrudging service of His children whom in His Name we can encourage and cheer and guide. Among the most significant and far-reaching of the visions recounted in the New Testament is, perhaps, the vision to Peter on the housetop at Joppa. But it was not for meditation only. 'While Peter thought on the vision the Spirit said unto him, "Behold, three men seek thee. Arise and get thee down."' If God vouchsafes now to you or to me the supreme vision of His presence, it is because 'three men,' or many times 'three,' are waiting even now. 'Arise and get thee down.' The foemen, too, are there—the giant forces of wrong, of apathy, of ignorance, of indifference to the things of God.

* 'Songs Old and New,' by Mrs. Charles, p. 59.

'Arise and get thee down: nothing doubting.' Rich in the strength of that vision, give good cheer —give it this very week—to every fellow-worker. Tell them, as Caleb told Israel, 'Go up and possess the land, for we are well able to overcome it.' Tell them, as Elisha did, 'Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they which be with them.'

It is the very message which should ring out in a Congress week. God make it living for us all!

One closing word. The Congress meets this year in what is, in one sense, the very earliest home of our National Church. The Church of Christ was in vigorous life among the headlands and the hills of Wales while heathenism still ruled in Kent. To-day we thank God here for fourteen—for perhaps fifteen—centuries of continuous worship and devoted work, and with our thanksgiving we ask His pardon for whatsoever in those long centuries of our Church's life has been amiss. To the Church in Wales, the oldest living thing upon British soil, we from England's eastern shores pay a glad tribute of reverence and love. The slower-witted and more prosaic Saxon has always had much to learn from the religious fervour and insight of the Celt, if he has tried at times to contribute something in return. Whatsoever things our Church and people have known and loved of holy vision or of mystic thought —in these we cede to you an unchallenged leadership. 'Where there is no vision, the people perish.'

An ancient legend tells that if, on the wind-swept promontory where St. David's Cathedral stands in its indefeasible majesty, a man will take a clod of turf from the Cathedral churchyard, and, standing upon it, gaze out over the Atlantic waves, he will see rising in the distant waters the green island of the fairies, a vision of a land that is very far off. Apply in Christian form that legend of the bards. Take your stand upon what the Church of St. David's has to tell—of victories won for God in days of old; of faith maintained in dark and wintry times; of poetry which has given courage and visions which have brought light and hope. And then look outward and onward. For you, too, a bright vision shall rise—a vision of the wider, sturdier, nobler faith that God will teach us in the days that are to come; a vision of fresh enthusiasm for the old, old ministry of Word and Sacrament; a vision of new strength to win new victories over the powers of devilry and wrong. So, from the green turf-plot of St. David's soil, rich in the very oldest continuous story of our Church's life, our children's children shall, by the blessing of the Lord Himself, see greater things than these.

XIV. THIRTEEN HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY, ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL*

Whoso is wise will ponder these things, and they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord. PSALM CVII. 43.

'WHOSO is wise will ponder these things.' What things? The changes and chances, as men call them, of a people's life; of, if you will, a Church's life, in its strangely varied story. 'O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is gracious, and His mercy endureth for ever.' For ever. He has watched and guarded them throughout. Heresy might distract them, or faint-heartedness or fear might come. But He was there to guide, to forgive, to mend, to sustain. Sometimes 'they went astray in the wilderness out of the way.' Sometimes 'hungry and thirsty their soul fainted in them.' Sometimes 'He brought down their heart through heaviness.' But 'when they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, He delivered them out of their

* Rochester Cathedral, November 30, 1904.

distress. He sent His Word and healed them.' 'He maketh the wilderness a standing water, and water-springs of a dry ground, and there He setteth the hungry, that they may build them a city to dwell in.'

It is the very story of the Church's life, as we read it in the unrolling of the years. It is the story which rings out for us to-day within these wonderful walls, rich in their record of the shocks of change, and the creeping onward of decay, and the buoyancy and hopefulness of each recuperation and new start. From crypt to pinnacle, from aisle and tower and transept, 'The stone cries out of the wall, and the beam of the timber answers it'*: 'O that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and declare the wonders that He doeth for the children of men. . . . Whoso is wise will ponder these things, and they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.'

Thirteen hundred years! It is a long time, as man reckons or as man's buildings stand. But we have it mapped out before us to-day. May I in simplest words remind you of the bare outline of the story? Hear the words of the Venerable Bede, writing not so very long after our thirteen hundred years began:

'In the year of our Lord's Incarnation 604, Augustine the Archbishop of Britain ordained two Bishops, namely Mellitus and Justus—Mellitus to preach to the province of the East Saxons, who are divided from Kent by the River Thames, and are con-

* Hab. ii. 11.

tiguous to the Eastern Sea. Their capital is the city of London, which is situated on the bank of that river, and is the emporium of many peoples coming by land and by sea. . . . Justus was ordained Bishop by Augustine in Kent itself, at the city of Dorubrevis, which is called by the English, after Hrof, a former chieftain there, Rochester. It is about twenty-four miles to the west of Doruvernis (Canterbury), and there King Ethelbert erected the Church of the blessed Apostle Andrew.' *

Close below yonder western wall can still be seen a portion of that very church then builded by the Kentish King. It had to stand against strange vicissitudes. In the words of the Elizabethan antiquary, Lambarde—

'No marvaile is it, if the glory of the place were not at any time very great, since on the one side the abilitie of the Bishops and the Chanons (inclined to advaunce it) was but meane, and on the other side the calamitie of fire and sword (bent to destroy it) was in manner continuall.' †

When four centuries and a half had passed, Ethelbert's church—I apologize for reminding you of what many here know quite as well as I do—was replaced by this very building, to speak roughly, in which we are worshipping God to-day. To Gundulf,

* Bede, 'Ecclesiastical History,' ii. 3.

† Quoted in 'The Cathedral Church of Rochester,' by G. H. Palmer (1897), p. 5.

the great builder-Bishop of the Norman Conquest, we owe, in part, these massive walls. At his hands, too, was wrought a change unique in some respects in the records of English Cathedrals. For four centuries and a half, from its start under King Ethelbert down to the days of William the Conqueror, this Cathedral had been staffed and served, not by monks but by 'secular' clergy, corresponding somewhat more nearly to our English clergy to-day. Gundulf replaced these by monks. To quote again the quaint words of Lambarde, whose eyes had seen in Reformation days the opposite swing of the same pendulum: Gundulf 're-edified the great church at Rochester, erected the Priorie, and whereas he founde but half a dozen secular priests in the Church at his comming, he never ceased till he had brought together at the least three score Monkes into the place. . . . To be short, Gundulphus (overliving Lanfranc) never rested building and begging, tricking and garnishing, till he had advaunced this his creature to the just wealth, beautie, and estimation of a right Popish Priorie.'* And what Lambarde calls the 'Popish Priorie' continued in vigorous life for four centuries and a half, just about the same length of time as the secular or non-monastic period which had gone before it. And then nearly four hundred years ago the pendulum began to swing back again, and amid the dust and strife of

* Palmer, p. 9.

Reformation years, the monastery disappeared from view, and the clergy to whom the great Cathedral was entrusted were again what they had been at first, clergy bearing their share in the ordinary duties of English citizenship and in the common life of men. Thus, speaking very roughly, we can divide the thirteen eventful centuries of our Cathedral's life into three not very unequal periods—the central period only being a 'monastic time.'

It is, I think, worth while, upon a day like this, to recall in outline those changing conditions, if only to remind you how our Church, without in the least impairing the continuity of her life or the fundamentals of her faith, has from the first shown that life to be adaptable to what were thought at the time to be the national or local needs, and has not shrunk, when occasion called for it, from even the boldest measures of internal renovation and reform. 'From strength to strength.' She has been in touch with every generation from the sixth century to the twentieth; and as we leap in thought across the sundering years, with all their faults and failures, and with all their abundant blessing, the words and the lesson that underlies them keep recurring to the mind: 'Whoso is wise will ponder these things, and they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.'

About the story of a living Church, just as about the structure of a great building which owes its growth to different men at different times, there is

always very much that is mysterious, very much that is hard to understand aright when we try to unravel the story in after years. Walk in the gloaming round the aisles and transepts of a great cathedral, and you will see shadows that you cannot explain and dark bits that you do not penetrate—yes, and beauties too of arch and buttress and moulding which owe their glamour and their suggestiveness in no small degree to the fact that they are not standing out in the glare of daylight, or as isolated things, however beautiful, but are parts of a larger and more mysterious whole, whereof it is impossible for us just then to understand aright either the proportion, or the harmonies, or the origin, or the meaning. As with the stones of the building, so in the living history, there are usages and phrases and forms which have become endeared by association and hallowed by sacred memories, and which refuse to limit themselves to the prosaic bounds of common parlance and etymology. But not for that reason have they lost their power. Rather do they bid us feel how little there is in the matters of our holy Faith that we as yet completely see and understand, and how we are at the best only able to get a glimpse—often shadowy and uncertain—of the whole truth, which we shall some day see and understand, 'when the day breaks and the shadows flee away.'

To-day we have come to one of the milestones

upon our road. However long the life of our Cathedral is yet to be, what has happened to-day will always be remembered and recorded as a marked point in the story. For not only are we deliberately looking back along the centuries, and recalling 'what great things God hath done for us,' but we are adding or refashioning in the outward structure something that will remain, and we are, in the spiritual fabric of our corporate life as a Diocese, making a new start, or looking forward to a new start, in conditions which we believe will help us to work for our Lord and Master a great deal more efficiently than before.

May I say a word about each of these two things? It was some five hundred and fifty years ago that a tower with tapering spire first caught men's eyes on Rochester Cathedral, and pointed a finger upwards in firm and buoyant hope. That was in the stirring days of the French wars, when chivalry was at its best, and when the great order of our knighthood was founded —with its red cross of St. George upon the white shield, whose bearer was pledged (I quote the words of the oath) 'to the just and necessary defence of them that are oppressed and needy.' And so it stood, subject to the ravages of storm and spoiler and 'restorer,' until almost within the memory of a few who are here to-day. Seventy-seven years ago it was replaced by the less worthy tower which we have known so well. And to-day, by the loyal munificence of a

generous Churchman,* whose gift recalls the too-rarely followed usages of our richer citizens in bygone times, we have again a tower and spire which are worthy of their place and their surroundings, and which seem to cry aloud to us to see to it that the rest of the work be taken in hand ere long, and that the Cathedral thus regain in the lines of roof and gable the worthier character which was once its own. Let the past with all its vicissitudes speak to willing ears—'Whoso is wise will ponder these things, and they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.' It would be a noble thing could we thus thankfully mark our thirteen hundredth anniversary and the start of our new Diocesan life, by a 'restoration' significantly completed.

So much for the outward fabric. And now a word about the juncture in our corporate life. It is a truism to say that no cathedral in England has had to strive as Rochester Cathedral has pathetically striven to be a centre of worship and work for a Diocese so restlessly chopped and changed in size and shape and area. At one time or another this plastic and patient Diocese has contained parts of no fewer than seven different counties—Kent, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Surrey, and the administrative County of London. Now at last —a Kentish Diocese as of old— it bids fair to resume in the main the manageable size and area

* Mr. Thomas Hellyar Foord.

which it had during far the longest period in its history.*

I have myself, in a varied experience, known no administrative problem which has baffled so many competent men, as they have set themselves, time after time, the task of trying to solve it fairly and satisfactorily. We seem to be in sight of the consummation now, and there can be no one here to-day, whatever his individual predilections may have been, who does not wish it in its new life—young and yet so old—a hearty and reverent God-speed. We who have striven through long and sometimes disheartening years to devise the best possible working plan for this bit of England, so strangely different in population and conditions from what it used to be of old, do honestly believe—and I say it with all my heart—that what is now proposed will enable those upon whose shoulders rests this anxious responsibility, to do their work better day by day for the advancement here, among men and women and children in Kent and Surrey, of the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour.

Only one more point. We meet this morning to commemorate a very ancient day, the day of King Ethelbert and Bishop Justus. We meet to

* The boundaries of the Dioceses of Canterbury and Rochester were, when this sermon was preached, being legally rearranged by the re-transfer to Rochester of certain Rural Deaneries which had for a time been annexed to Canterbury.

dedicate the tower and spire which will henceforth attract men's eyes and raise men's thoughts as they did long ago. We meet on the very eve, as we hope, of a new departure in Diocesan arrangement and work, from which we have a right to hope high things.

But we meet, too, in the shadow of a great bereavement. Who that has in recent years come to Rochester Cathedral for prayer and praise and teaching but feels the blank to-day? For seventeen years, not here in Rochester only, but far afield, and on both sides of the Atlantic, the Dean has been a living force for God and good.* Some here will recall the striking picture in the Book of Ecclesiasticus of the High Priest Simon as he stood in the Temple at Jerusalem. Do you remember the glow of enthusiasm with which the writer tells of the great Priest's work as the restorer of the Temple and its crypt, and as himself the foremost figure among them all?

'It was Simon, the son of Onias, the great priest, who in his life repaired the House, and in his days strengthened the Temple. And by him was built from the foundation the double wall, the lofty underworks of the inclosure of the Temple.'†

And the man himself, towering among his brethren 'as a cedar in Libanus,' in the 'ascent of the holy

* Samuel Reynolds Hole became Dean of Rochester in 1887, and died at Rochester on August 27, 1904.

† Ecclus. l. 1 (R.V.).

altar,' when the people gathered round him at his coming forth out of the sanctuary '*as the flower of roses* in the days of new fruits, as lilies at the water spring.' 'And the people besought the Lord most High, in prayer before Him that is merciful, till the worship of the Lord should be ended. Then he went down and lifted up his hands over the whole congregation . . . to give blessing unto the Lord with his lips, and to glory in His Name.'* Is not the ancient poem the very portrait of the man we knew? But to many of us it is not mainly the grand figure of the old man that we miss to-day, or the clear ring of that potent voice, capable as he was of stirring and even swaying, in no ordinary degree, the hearts of those to whom he spoke, now with penetrating pathos, now with generous enthusiasm, now with searching wit—or again with a scathing scorn of anything contemptible or mean. It is not that only or mainly. Rather it is the man himself—as gentle and loving as he was strong—the man of simple tastes and enthusiastic love of flowers—the man of quiet child-like faith and genuine hopefulness, and truest human sympathy, the unfailing friend, and counsellor, and pastor. He it is whose absence to-day—if he be indeed absent—makes us look round wonderingly, and brings the unbidden tear. To some of us, and not least to me, he was such a friend as we do not meet often upon life's pathway. And yet he would be

* Ecclus. l. 8, 12, 19, 20.

to-day the first to bid us to look onward and upward, and to go forward brightly to our task.

My friends, I have done. I cannot say to you all that is swelling in my heart to-day. To me, this Diocese, this Cathedral, whereto I was consecrated thirteen years ago, must have a place in happy memories and daily prayers which is in some ways unique while life shall last. To stand here to-day and to wish God-speed at such an hour to those whom I see around me now, this great cohort of my well-known and trusted friends and brothers, to whose keeping are entrusted the workfield and the work—is a privilege which I should not easily have foregone. The work is arduous and the difficulties are neither light nor few. But it is with high hopefulness that we all look onward now, as the fourteenth century of your storied life begins. Yes! 'The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.' 'Whoso is wise will ponder these things, and they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.'

XV. EIGHT HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY, ELY CATHEDRAL*

One generation shall praise Thy works unto another, and declare Thy power.

PSALM CXLV. 5.

I SUPPOSE it is a fact that there are more perplexing problems astir in Christendom to-day than there ever were before—more problems, that is, and harder problems, for the average thoughtful Christian man. Life in earlier centuries was a simpler thing, or, at all events, it did not look so complex as it does to-day. There were huge and manifold forces of wrong against which Christian folk had to fight hard. There was roughness and cruelty and misrule. Might was right. The weak went to the wall. Mistakes and misbeliefs, or what were thought to be misbeliefs, had a sterner, coarser penalty meted out to them than we are used to see. I doubt whether any of us can really transplant himself back in thought into the days, say, when these great round arches first rose, white and new, above the Fens, or

* Preached in Ely Cathedral on St. Ethelreda's Day, October 17, 1906.

when, two centuries later, your octagon, unique in Christendom, grew to life before men's wondering eyes. If he could, if he could touch and see, as they actually were, the home life, or the working life, or the warrior life of the contemporaries of Abbot Simeon, or even of Alan de Walsingham, he would, I firmly believe, find the contrast to be very much greater than is commonly realized. I think, further, that the most startling contrast would show itself, not in external things and comforts, so much as in the standards and aims and endeavours of average men and women, whether rich or poor. I know what is said upon the other side in favour of the then people and their life, as contrasted with ourselves, and nowhere has it been said more trenchantly and eloquently than in East Anglia. But to me at least it seems clear that the basis and *raison d'être* of our greater answerableness to God and man is the higher level and standard which have in the Divine Providence been attained for us by those who in recent centuries have fought the battles whereof we reap the gain, and won the foothold whereon we, to our peril, stand. And with the change has come something else—a better understanding (shall we call it) of our ignorance, a recognition that life is a far more complex thing than people once supposed, and that issues which (whether they were difficult or not) used at least to look simple are not so simple after all.

A day and an occasion like this give us splendid

opportunity of such thought, and for it the very best thinking-place, I believe, which can possibly be found is an English cathedral, and best of all perhaps this Cathedral Church of Ely. We have in recollection to-day what was being done in October, 1106, when men were gathered, in a spirit of glad veneration, to place in yet nobler surroundings than before the marble shrine of the great foundress Queen, and when the work of the Cathedral builders was going steadily, splendidly, contentedly forward, and these transepts at the least had taken the very form which evokes or inspires our thankful reverence to-day. Sometimes when we reach a hand across the centuries, and do again or do anew what our predecessors did five, or six, or perhaps eight, hundred years ago, we have the strange interest and even glamour of feeling that we are emphasizing the continuous life of the Church of Christ by doing just what our far-off ancestors would have done if they had been alive to-day. For example, the present See of Truro—with which this cathedral is now happily cementing so close a link of affection*—was founded, or re-founded, just thirty years ago. Bishop Lightfoot, preaching at the consecration of its first Bishop—so soon to be one of the greatest of our Primates—spoke thus:

'We need no more striking illustration of the

* Dr. Charles William Stubbs, Dean of Ely, had just been nominated to the See of Truro.

vitality of our ecclesiastical institutions and the continuity of our national history, than the fact that the work of to-day is intimately connected with the work of eight centuries ago. The Cornish bishopric was united with the Devon bishopric under Edward the Confessor; they are once more separated under Victoria. The reason given for the union in the Confessor's charter is the scanty numbers and the poverty of these districts, the coasts of Devon and Cornwall having been devastated by pirates. The reason for a separation now is the reversal of this condition of things.'*

But sometimes (and this is surely true to-day) the unseen contrast as to the meaning of our action is as voiceful as the obvious, the superficial, likeness. It sets us thinking, for our good. Try, difficult as it is, to cast back your thoughts this afternoon across the eight centuries, and compare, for a few moments, the attitude of mind, the aim and purpose, which, to the best of our knowledge and belief, actuated and inspired the founders and builders of a great cathedral in the earlier Middle Ages, with the attitude of mind, the aim and purpose which belong to thoughtful, earnest Christian people to-day in regard to the character and use of our cathedral buildings. True, of course, that in the largest and deepest sense those men of old and we are at one. The Creed which we have repeated to-day was their Creed. Our worship,

* Bishop Lightfoot, 'Sermons on Special Occasions,' p. 67.

our Sacraments, were theirs. Our actual Liturgy was in its main features theirs also. And we hold to, and magnify, and try to strengthen and fulfil, the very purpose which they had when, with patient toil, and with skill almost incredible, they reared on the Isle of Ely one of the noblest houses of God in the world. Yes. In the large main lines we and they are at one. In the words of the old cathedral chronicler, Henry of Huntingdon, more than seven hundred years ago, *Amabant quæ amamus : optabant quæ optamus : sperabant quæ speramus* (They loved what we love: their aims, their hopes, are ours).

But how much more simple and obvious and unchallengeable the thoughts were to them, in the ninth, or the eleventh, or the fifteenth century than they are to us in the twentieth! To us there is about these deepest things a sense of mystery, which, in that form at least, they did not feel.

> 'What can we know?
> How can we mete the masonry of God?
> Our spirits are His trowel and His hod.
> We guess a part: He pre-ordains the whole.
> We lay a stone. He labours at a soul.
> How can we see with His all-seeing sight
> Issues so broad,
> Meanings so infinite?'*

I do not think that they had to bear what almost every thoughtful, faithful, truth-loving man has to

* Ode written for the celebration of the Quatercentenary of the University of Aberdeen, 1906, by R. C. Macfie. See Record of the Celebration, p. 575.

bear to-day—the sense of the overwhelming mystery of it all. An urgent invitation was sent, as you know, to Archbishop Anselm that he should take part in this day's great solemnity in 1106. Had he, the foremost thinker of his age, been here on that memorable day, instead of being, as the chronicler says, 'far away in Kent,' and had he said his weighty say about the meaning of what was going on, what would have been the burden of his appeal? It is not, I think, very easy to tell.

He would be a rash man who should expect to repicture with exactness the motive forces which influenced the cathedral builders or designers of eight hundred years ago, or the donors who made possible the carrying forward of their work on such a scale. But I suppose we may at least say with certainty that at the root and centre there was in the mind both of donor and designer and artificer a genuine simple wish to offer of his very best, whether in benefactory gift, or in skill of design and handicraft, to the direct service of the Church of God, and that he felt this, not in any fanciful or far-fetched way, but as a plain and obvious duty and opportunity. To erect a cathedral or a splendid church was a demonstration—great and manifest—of a reverent loyalty and belief. The building or endowing of it was an explicit act of reverence, calculated to enhance on earth the ampler glory of the Son of God, of His Blessed Virgin Mother, and very notably

too of some particular saint or saints; and it was in itself, as men believed and taught, distinctly meritorious and rewardable. To this we must add—and we are bound to add it prominently—what we technically call the eschatological element; the thought of purgatory and its pains, and the power, as men firmly believed, to secure by means of such action and gifts remedy or alleviation of these pains. This summarizes, I think, the dominant motives and ideas which led to the beautifying and dignifying of England by the cathedrals which are among the priceless glories of our inheritance from medieval days. I fear we ought to add—human nature being what it is—the somewhat baser element of rivalry between one shrine or fabric and another; the very explicable desire to surpass in our own gift or action, and in the beauty of its outcome, what someone else has given or designed or done elsewhere. But that belongs to the details rather than to the principle of the matter, and it is with the principle only that I concern myself to-day.

Observe, then, how simple all this is. Right or wrong, the issues are plain. Unstinted largesse in money and in artistic skill; a solemn act of reverence to our Lord; a steady remembrance of the issues which lie beyond this life. Marred as it may sometimes have been by human frailty or mistakes, it is splendid surely in its great outline of purpose and act, and it is brimful of lessons for us still. Into the problem—

quite unexplained, I think, as yet—of how the architectural spirit was at one time 'in the air' throughout England, I do not enter now. It was not concentrated in a great genius here and there. It was universally prevalent and potent in the land. 'It seemed,' someone has said, 'as if the world had shaken itself, and, throwing off the slough of age, had clothed itself with a white robe of churches;' and churches, remember, almost every one of which was (if I may quote the too severe words of a great teacher and historian) 'a consummate work of art, of which we, attempting a vain rivalry, produce only slavish copies or stiff and clumsy caricatures.' That subject, rich and suggestive as it is, I pass by. I am dwelling only upon the influence which religion had in animating and fertilizing architectural genius. And that influence was, I repeat, quite simple in itself. No one doubted in those days that the devotion, the sacrifice, the generosity thus expended were well and wisely expended—better expended perhaps than they could have been in any other way.

There is a curious passage in a book widely read some thirty years ago, in which the writer describes our cathedrals as the outcome of what he not obscurely seems to regard as the spirit of a false religion. He describes the impression produced (I quote his words) upon 'a zealous Protestant, if he be a man of culture as well as zeal,' as he gazes on

some great continental cathedral and 'marvels at the glorious structures which intense devotion to what he deems little less than anti-Christian faith could rear in the dark days of Catholic supremacy. "Thank God," he exclaims, "for a false religion."'*

The writer of that sentence and its context, in his dislike of the distortions or aberrations of medieval faith, has surely failed to grasp the very elements of the spirit which, with straightforward simplicity, bid men build the great churches and cathedrals which were the outward expression of a wholehearted, a deliberate, an outspoken, an unpuzzled, devotion, the strength and intensity of which, however we may criticize its reasonableness or its range, has the abiding witness of such walls as these. We all remember the testimony—the half-reluctant testimony perhaps—which the soaring nave of Amiens Cathedral evoked from the philosopher Heine: 'Opinions cannot build such walls as these. Convictions can.'

Turn now from the past to the present, from Norman and Plantagenet days to our own. We value intensely, beyond easy expression, our cathedrals—their beauty and their use. But the revival on a popular and general scale throughout the Church of England of that full appreciation of the actual building is an absolutely modern thing.

It falls almost within the lifetime of many of us who are here. Half a century ago, in a few vivid

* Greg, 'Enigmas of Life' (1872), p. 223.

touches, first in 'Alton Locke,' and then in 'Yeast,' Charles Kingsley gave us faithful sketches of what men felt about them and did with them then. The sketches are hardly believable by the boy readers of to-day. We all remember his picture of the young man's chance visit to St. Paul's Cathedral.

'The afternoon service,' he says, 'was proceeding. The organ droned sadly in its iron cage to a few musical amateurs. Some nursery maids and foreign sailors stared about within the spiked felon's dock which shut off the body of the Cathedral, and tried in vain to hear what was going on inside the choir. . . . The scanty service rattled in the vast building, like a dried kernel too small for its shell. The place breathed imbecility, and unreality, and sleepy life-in-death, while the whole nineteenth century went roaring on its way outside. . . . Whither all this? Coleridge's dictum, that a cathedral is a petrified religion, may be taken to bear more meanings than one.'*

That account, at all events, would be an anachronism to-day. We have learned, as our fathers had not learned, to realize the strength and value of these mighty shrines; to value them not for what they were, but for what they are, in utility and power, for the present-day needs of English life.

For the present-day needs of English life. To

* 'Yeast,' p. 291 (ed. 1879).

two great teachers who had, in closest Cambridge friendship, stimulated one another to the task, we are indebted in large measure for the spread of a thoughtful, popular appreciation of what cathedrals and cathedral life may do for England now. It is difficult to exaggerate the debt which, in a score of different ways, the contemporary Church of England owes to those two great Churchmen prophets—Brooke Foss Westcott and Edward White Benson—and one of the largest items of the debt is for their teaching us how best to revive and to adapt to modern needs the cathedral life of medieval England. It is of surpassing interest and profitableness to remember that the schoolboy who (alone surely among the whole schoolboy race of the modern world) made it the burden of his boyish prayers that God would 'revive the cathedral spirit in England,' should have lived to be the Bishop to whose lot it happily fell to build for his diocese the only new cathedral which has yet been founded and built in England since the Reformation. May I add that it is of happy augury that a Dean who stands foremost as an authoritative interpreter to his contemporaries of the lessons and messages of an old cathedral should occupy with general welcome that same Cornish see, and find himself one of the few Bishops who is himself the Dean of his cathedral.*

* See above, p. 202, note.

What these great twin brothers taught us about the capacities of active present-day service which inhere in a cathedral body, revived upon ancient lines, relates of course to the system of its capitular and diocesan life rather than to the history or use of its actual fabric, and the system lies outside the special thought which I suggest this afternoon.

The force which a Cathedral Chapter can bring to bear upon our modern Church life, the part which it can play in our contemporary religious activities, the peculiar value which attaches, in a restless, hurrying age, to its contribution of learning and thoughtfulness, and our determined recurrence with that object to the old ideals — these are notable examples of the continuous threads which run through warp and woof in the Church's enduring life. And they are compatible with—nay, they even require—our putting the cathedral buildings themselves to other and larger uses than those whereof Abbot Simeon or Alan de Walsingham in the Isle of Ely, or Ernulf or William the Englishman at Canterbury, or even William of Wykeham at Winchester, had ever dreamed. And as we thank God for the new service which our cathedrals are rendering before our own eyes to English life, we can gratefully rejoice in the knowledge that the glorious naves and long-drawn aisles, which the piety of devout men raised in old time throughout England as an offering to God and to His saints, and an utterance of the

eager loyalty of His servants, should now be of constant help in the cause of God and good to the teeming populations of our great cities, or the gathered worshippers and listeners from rural tracts who can come together on high occasions as they could not come in roadless, railless days gone by.

We are accustomed, of course, to the easy scoffs of those who have no touch at all with the aspirations, the aims, the principles of a cathedral and its life, who, with ignorant contempt, regard its reverently-ordered daily ritual and music as sheer waste of time and money, and mock at the little band of worshippers who are brought together by the daily offering of praise and prayer. To such critics our reply would have to go down to the foundation of what worship means, and I need not dwell upon it now.

But there are questionings very different from these which find expression among earnest, thoughtful men to-day. From a recent book of singular grace, which has given thoughts and suggestions to not a few of us, I take these sentences. The writer is revelling in the quiet happiness of a 'pious pilgrimage' to a great cathedral, one of these—to quote his words—'one of these great poems in stone, beautiful in their first conception, and infinitely more beautiful from the mellowing influences of age, and from the human tradition that is woven into them and through them.' He dwells on the 'pure

and holy pleasure' which the cathedral service can convey; how 'it refreshes, it calms, it pacifies; it tells the heart that there is a peace into which it is possible to enter, and where it may rest for awhile and fold its weary wings.'

And then this follows: 'Yet even as I write, as the gentle mood lapses and fades, I find myself beset with uneasy and bewildering thoughts about the whole. What was the power that raised these great places as so essential and vital a part of life? We have lost it now, whatever it was. Churches like these were then an obvious necessity; Kings and Princes vied with each other in raising them, and no one questioned their utility. They are now a mere luxury for ecclesiastically-minded persons. . . . Life has flowed away from their portals and left them a beautiful shadow, a venerable monument, a fragrant sentiment. No doubt it was largely superstition that constructed them, a kind of insurance paid for heavenly security. No one now seriously thinks that to endow a college of priests to perform services would affect his spiritual prospects in the life to come. . . . It leaves me in a sad and bewildered conflict of spirit. And yet I somehow feel that God is in these places, and that, if only the heart is pure and the will strong, such influences can minister to the growth of the meek and loving spirit.'*

I have quoted these sentences because I believe

* A. C. Benson, 'The Upton Letters,' pp. 85-87.

them to give expression with power and faithfulness to thoughts which are simmering uninvited, even resented, but still simmering, in a good many minds. To me it seems certain that the qualms and disquietude are unnecessary, and are capable of a firm and definite reply. I would even say that in no other surroundings, through no other form of service, does the deliberate mind, the distinctive character, of the Church of England find truer scope, or more definitely help the people of to-day, if they will set themselves to make its message their own, and to fit it into the everyday needs of a working, striving life. Rightly used, there can in it and about it be no anachronism. God is by the very means of this mighty shrine and its associations speaking straight to our hearts to-day, stimulating our thoughts and nerving our arms for more robust service than before. 'One generation shall praise Thy works unto another, and declare Thy power.' The very fact that we can and do find now in the twentieth century a grander and more popular use for our cathedrals, whether in the dusty centres of commerce or in the quieter cities of the countryside, than the fashioners of the vaulted symmetry and the spacious pavement ever imagined; the very fact that each year more men and women and little children than ever before flock thither with worship to offer and with ears to hear; the very fact that this modern possibility, this modern usage, differs so

greatly from what was planned or expected in the days of the first upbuilding of the walls, brings home to us the thought how 'God fulfils Himself in many ways,' how He inspires men to enterprises the fruit and outcome of which are larger than they know. The Divine purpose is manifold. The ultimate service to be rendered to the world by this or that reverent gift is in God's hands rather than in ours.

What we do know is that here and now, long centuries off from the founders' and foundresses' days, their buildings are impregnate with a living, stirring power unknown to those by whom roof and aisle were planned and pavement laid. The site of the sepulchral shrine round which men knelt on this festal day eight hundred years ago is vacant now. What would we not give to have back with us in our English cathedrals the monuments which perished in the rough, the deplorable, but in the long-run the wholesome strifes and strivings of three hundred or four hundred years ago. Men thought little then of a policy and practice of destruction which would now be denounced by almost every Englishman whatever his sympathies or sect or creed. We have learned to care as our forefathers did not care about things that are old.

It has been finely said that this new love for what is old, this desire to cherish the memorials of the past, is God's compensation to the world for its advancing years. The farther we recede from those

days of old, the more eager our caring to attach ourselves to every link that remains. Such a fabric as this bears to men the message, not fanciful, but potent and forceful, of the historic continuity of the Church of Christ as a living force amid all the varieties and vicissitudes of usage and of men. In buildings such as this the homage we tender, the care we give to what is old, is given not for the mere sake of its hoary age, but for the sake of what its age enshrines. Here (to adapt words spoken in Westminster Abbey twenty years ago)* the historic past lives in the living present. Here where our greatest and best have been honoured so in death that in a parable their shadow may fall on some of us; here where in constant procession sweep onwards through choir and aisle and transept inspiring visions of the worship and the pageants of other days—from Etheldreda to Canute—from Canute to Abbots Simeon and Richard—and from them to the Bishops and Priors of feudal days, and on to Morton and Thirlby, to Lancelot Andrewes and Matthew Wren—and to great men nearer to our memories to-day. There is nothing material, nothing merely secular in our vision. No soul was ever lowered by the sight of this wondrous fabric into material thoughts. No thinking man ever failed to see, read, hear its witness to things spiritual. From galilee to octagon, from floor to pinnacle, the

* Archbishop Benson, July 2, 1888.

voice rings out: 'Put not your trust in man or in any child of man;' 'Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter.' Yes, the thought of what a cathedral is, as an offering to God, as a help to man, may be to many of us less simple, less obvious, than it used to be, but it is not for that reason less invigoratingly true. 'One generation shall praise Thy works unto another, and declare Thy power.'

We have gathered a message from the past; we pass on a message to those who shall come after. We want them to be better servants of God, better servants of man, than we have been, and to that end we mean that it shall become constantly a more natural, a more helpful thing to use these noble houses of God aright; to find in the enduring tale which they tell of the vicissitudes of English life in days gone by a storehouse of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and strength for English life now. They keep us in touch, as scarcely anything else can, with the great things which happened long ago, with the men great and small, whom God guided and helped then through all their efforts and errors, through their half-hearted strivings and their successive victories over what was, in their day, cowardly, or mean, or cruel, or thoughtless. He Who helped them will help us still, and will do it not by great or irresistible tides of incoming power, but by the quiet refreshment of each day's answer to each

day's faithful, persevering prayer. In John Ruskin's noble words—

'Let every dawn of morning be to you as the beginning of life, and every setting sun be to you as its close; then let every one of these short lives leave its sure record of some kindly thing done for others—some goodly strength or knowledge gained for yourselves: so, from day to day and strength to strength, you shall build up, indeed, by Art, by Thought, and by Just Will, an Ecclesia of England, of which it shall not be said, "See what manner of stones are here," but, "See what manner of men." '*

The Lord reigneth. Our Cathedral in symbol and in history tells us so.

> 'The hands that made these spires were held
> By the strong hand that holds the seas,
> And every pillar was compelled,
> By mighty cosmic energies.
> And what we have not rightly wrought
> In stone or thought,
> Will not endure: yet even so
> Out of the false the true will grow.'†

'One generation shall praise Thy works unto another.'

* 'Lectures on Art': Lecture IV., 'The Relation of Art to Use,' vol. xx., p. 117 (ed. 1905).

† Macfie, Quatercentenary Ode, *ut supra*, p. 576.

XVI. MILLENARY OF WELLS CATHEDRAL*

God is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto Him.

St. Luke xx. 38.

The words are Christ's emphatic justification of what we are doing in Wells and Glastonbury to-day. We thank God for what happened a thousand years ago. We say that it concerns us. We bring it all —past and present years, and future too—straight to God—our prayers, our praises, and our plans. Jesus Christ was answering a petty quibble of the Sadducees about His teaching on the Resurrection. He lifts the whole matter, as always, to a higher level. 'Do not,' He seems to say, 'look upon each life, or each set of contemporary lives, as a separate thing. It is one living whole, one onward movement, under the hand of God, 'from strength to strength.' Go back in thought to your Moses fifteen hundred years ago. God spoke to him, as He speaks to you, and sent him

* Preached in Wells Cathedral on June 22, 1909.

back in turn across the farther centuries to Abraham and the patriarchs. He was, and is, in touch with all, as parts of one living, growing, throbbing life. Each generation of men is—not 'was,' but 'is'—part of it. 'God is not the God of the dead, but of the living: for all live (are alive) unto Him.'

That is the very thought, surely, which we rejoice in to-day. It is the sacred side of what a millenary means, and it is well worth while to do what we are doing now. Look at it thus. In plain prosaic fact, the exact incident we are at this moment commemorating can be stated in a way which has little in it to inspire or stimulate us. One day, just a thousand years ago, in Canterbury Cathedral, Archbishop Plegmund, a devout and scholarly person, who had been appointed Archbishop of Canterbury by King Alfred, consecrated seven priests, none of them very famous people, to be Bishops. One of these, Athelm, or Aethelhelm, was sent to be the first Bishop of Somerset, with his Cathedral or Bishop's seat here in Wells, at the foot of the rough forest hills of Mendip, a little town or village of purely English and Christian origin, claiming, as its very name shows, no Roman or British forerunner, but possessing already its church of St. Andrew, with its holy springs or 'wells' hard by. Such is the fact in plain prose. But he who cares to look a little farther, and to think a little more, will, if he can place himself in touch with what was happening here a thousand years ago, find

his hand entwined in the living fibres, or, rather, in the early shoots, of what mattered most to the ultimate story of English life. 'God is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto Him.'

The whole history of Wells centres round—nay, rather is—the history of the bishopric and of its church, and it has often been pointed out that here, in and around the Cathedral precincts, we have in living activity before our eyes to-day, the most vivid presentment now remaining in England of the early life and work of a cathedral belonging to what is called the 'old foundation'—a cathedral, that is, which was never associated with a monastery, and which needed, therefore, when the monasteries were suppressed, no such drastic changes in its buildings and conditions as were required, say at Canterbury, Winchester, and elsewhere. Here, then, near the border of the still unconquered British, a colony of priests had been planted long before a bishop was placed at their head. Here, by the side of the holy springs, their church had risen, humble at first in comparison with its great neighbour, the ancient British monastery on the Isle of Glastonbury. There, strong already in rich historic tradition, and growing in wealth and fame and influence, stood the wonderful abbey, securely surrounded by the fordless fens, protected and favoured from the first by conquering Saxon as carefully as by the British

tribes across the border, to whom it owed its birth. It was 'the one great institution,' to quote your own Freeman's words, 'which bore up untouched through the storm of English conquest the one great tie which binds our race to the race which went before us, and which binds the Church of the last thirteen hundred years to the earlier days of Christianity in Britain. There, in their island, monks and pilgrims still worshipped in that primeval church of wood and wicker, which 'time and conquest had yet agreed to spare.' And thus, parted only by a few miles of mere and fen, the two rival or sister foundations lived their life and did their work for centuries. Each offered to God and to man a type of activity and fruitful service, which met a then perpetual need. For the work of each, in a tempestuous time, we are able to thank God to-day.

It would be out of place to dwell now upon the origin, or the predecessor in stone, of these Cathedral walls, or upon the details of their successive building and rebuilding. After the Norman Conquest, the names of Robert, and Severic, and Jocelin, among your bishops are familiar to every student of the Church. That Jocelin, the foremost among your many builders, and himself a native of the city of Wells, should have been one of the bishops specially concerned in wresting from King John the Great Charter at Runnymede, and that his name should be recorded therein as Bishop of 'Bath and Glastonbury,'

a title borne in that combination by none, I think, but Severic himself in all your thousand years, sets many thoughts, local and national, astir. It reminds us of how the old Roman city of Bath was already, with its wonderful abbey, connected with the See. It reminds us of the persistent attempt to bring the independent Glastonbury under episcopal control. What is far more important, it reminds us of the place of your Cathedral's life among the records of the things that matter most in English history, and of your special association with the Church's assertion of a people's liberties in face of a cowardly and faithless King. But I must not dwell upon the story of your thousand years, though it is hard to make no reference, on so memorable a day as this, to bishops of such varied gifts and manner of life as Richard Fox, scholar and divine, or Cardinal Wolsey, or William Laud, or especially to Thomas Ken, a man deservedly nearer than any of these to the hearts of the English people. 'God is not the God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto Him.'

Glastonbury lies at this hour, I suppose, outside our immediate purview. But it is impossible rightly to understand the thousand years of Wells unless we bear in mind that through the first six centuries of the ten, the great Abbey and the coming and going of its occupants, its visitors. its pilgrims, formed the chief factor in the local life of this whole region.

And at Glastonbury if anywhere, and to-day if ever,* we are thrown back in thought upon the past, as we resolve and pray and plan about the present and the future. It is not merely the story of the strenuous zeal and the religious administration of a Dunstan,† one of the very greatest, I think, of the pioneers of the English Church and Realm, or of the abbots who followed in his steps, or the abundant evidence we possess of the influence, wholesome and unwholesome, of monasticism in medieval England, or the story of its religious decline and fall, when, under new conditions, the work passed, and passed tempestuously, and sometimes cruelly, into other hands. That story, rich in stimulus and warning, is common to scores of religious houses in the land. Glastonbury is eminent alike for the scale and range of the influence of its cloistered life, and for the pathos of its sunset upon the Tor when its day was done.

But Glastonbury has something else besides. The sacred legends which surround it have a glorious life and story of their own, apart altogether from the monastery to whose fame and power they contributed so much. There are surely few facts more suggestive of the truth which underlies our thought this

* On the afternoon of the day on which this sermon was preached the ruined Abbey of Glastonbury, repurchased for the Church, was, in the presence of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, committed to the care of an Advisory Council with the Archbishop of Canterbury at its head.

† St. Dunstan was Abbot of Glastonbury from 943 to 960.

morning about continuous life than this series of three great happenings: First, that the old tales of Arthur and his Knights laid firm hold at an early time upon men's minds, and set them aglow for a novel but corresponding onslaught upon what was cowardly, or false, or mean. Secondly, that, centuries later, the same stories lived afresh, took new garb and a new range, and helped to give to medieval chivalry a sacred impress, and a definitely religious purpose and aim. Thirdly, that now, in our own so different day, the genius of the greatest poet of modern England has set afresh before the men and women of a striving, restless, hurrying age the inspiring thoughts and the ennobling ideals which are linked so gloriously with Glastonbury and its men of old.

The noble legend, 'The Quest of the Holy Grail,' be it an early recollection or adaptation of some actual fact, or be it a creation of the religious mysticism of the twelfth century, must be in the minds of every worshipper who will this afternoon take part in dedicating afresh to the glory of God, and to the use of the Church and people of England, the Abbey Island to which the story belongs:

> 'The Cup, the Cup itself, from which our Lord
> Drank at the last sad supper with his own,
> This . . . the good saint
> Arimathæan Joseph, journeying brought
> To Glastonbury, where the winter thorn
> Blossoms at Christmas, mindful of our Lord,

> And there awhile it bode ; and if a man
> Could touch or see it, he was healed at once
> By faith, of all his ills. But then the times
> Grew to such evil that the Holy Cup
> Was caught away to Heaven, and disappeared.' *

Literature, surely, has few things more beautiful, more suggestive, than the story of the knightly quest of the Sangreal. The more that we make of that story and of others that cluster round it, the more deliberately that we apply its ideals, its warnings, its disappointments and disillusionments, its failures, its hopes, to our far too prosaic and unenthusiastic lives to-day, the more pointed and helpful do its truths become. Does anything else, for example, in the poetry of our time, carry such a message to the mind of those who are making a new start in life's enterprise—say to a lad at his confirmation, or to a young officer receiving his commission, or to a strong man called to high office and responsible trust—does anything else carry such a message as do these visions of Sir Galahad or of King Arthur—Sir Galahad in the resistless strength of his stainless life, or the knights who are 'to ride abroad redressing human wrong,' or the King who

> ' Must guard
> That which he rules, and is but as the hind
> To whom a space of land is given to plough,
> Who may not wander from the allotted field
> Before his work is done.'†

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* Tennyson, 'The Holy Grail,' 46-58.

† *Ibid.*, 971, etc.

To these visions, which tell us what God has been felt and found to do for men of old, our thoughts must turn to-day, when we stand on holy ground here in Wells, with its thousand years of life and history, or yonder amongst the stones of the old Abbey, which has a longer record still of how one generation has praised His works unto another and declared His power. It has been His, as age has succeeded age, to bring good out of men's mistakes and failures, to turn the heart of the children to their fathers of long ago, and to teach us in written word and sculptured arch, and stones worn smooth by the knees of the folk who prayed, yes, and in a hundred dim records of days, quite other than our own, that those things form part of our continuous storied life, and that He is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

In the power of that knowledge, onward! onward, my brothers, from strength to strength. He who was with Abraham will be with Moses. He who guided Moses will guide the messengers of the Gospel of the Lord Christ. He who has held men by the hand in the centuries that are gone—Alfred and Dunstan and Jocelin, and Whyting and Laud and Ken, and ten thousand more—is not the God of the dead, but of the living. In His strength you will go forward to new conquests now.

XVII. THE BENEDICTION OF TRURO CATHEDRAL*

Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

ROMANS XV. 13.

So runs the epilogue or peroration of the Apostle's long letter to his friends in Rome. What follows is personal, almost private. Here he sums up his counsel in the prayer that, whatsoever else be theirs, they may abound in hope; and he rests his prayer upon the knowledge of what God had been doing for them and preparing for them all along, and of the joy and peace which may therefore rightfully be theirs. Can I wish you, men and women of Cornwall, a worthier blessing than 'That ye may abound in hope,' and could any words fit in more absolutely with our thoughts to-day? At such an hour, in such surroundings, these thoughts speak—nay, rather

* Preached in Truro Cathedral at the benediction of the nave, St. Swithun's Day, July 15, 1903.

they ring out—for themselves, and a preacher fears lest words of his should jar instead of helping, and longs that what is around us and overhead should be allowed its own eloquence in its own way. If this striking episode in England's story, this thing unknown for so many centuries in our land, the founding and upbuilding of a great Cathedral to form the centre of a county's religious life, were to be pictured in a single phrase, could we improve upon the thought which the text gives us—the thought of the 'God of hope filling you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost'? It is hope through and through—hope abounding and bearing fruit. No one can follow out the story of the planning, the founding, the upbuilding, the furnishing, the consecrating, the using, the adorning, the completing of this your glorious Cathedral without the thought springing unbidden as he reads or hears that what has brought it all to pass and made it glow and burn is the abounding power of quiet Christian hope.

I suppose it is always so in some degree when churches are built, but here in Truro it has surely been the paramount grace. Many of you to whom I speak are familiar with a little russet volume called 'The Cathedral,' in which the founder and first Bishop of this holy house of God gave to the world, twenty-five years ago (within a year, that is, of his

coming to Truro), his maturest thoughts upon what our cathedrals have been in the past and may yet again become. Do you remember the striking dedication of that little book? I think of it in connection with the grace of hopefulness whereof we speak. His words, remember, were written two years before even the foundation-stone of this glorious fabric was laid. The epigrammatic Latin is characteristically untranslatable, but the sense is baldly this: 'To his reverend brethren, the Canons Honorary of the Cathedral Church of St. Mary, of Truro, together with the gracious, if still shadowy, presences, even now drawing nigh, of the chancellors, precentors, and all others who by the blessing of God shall hereafter minister therein to the service of Christ's kingdom, this little book is dedicated by their Bishop.'* Verily 'We are saved by hope, . . . and if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.' In like fashion does the quietness and confidence of hope ring out in your Cathedral statutes framed by the same master-hand. Contrast the kind of words he used in his memorable preamble, or Proem, to the new statutes, with the terms which would probably have been used by some man whose eye was less calmly fixed upon the years

* 'Viris venerabilibus fratribus suis dominis canonicis honorariis Ecclesiæ Cathedralis B. V. Mariæ Truronensis, una cum appropinquantium amabilibus umbris cancellariorum præcentorum ceterorum qui inibi, faxit Deus, rei Christianæ famulabuntur, istud opusculum d. Episcopus.'

or centuries unborn, while in prophetic vision he linked on their coming work in a continuous chain to the work of ancient days. I ask no pardon for quoting some sentences from a document so peculiarly belonging to our thoughts and prayers to-day. It runs thus:

'It has been by most ancient records certainly concluded that from the earliest ages the Church of Christ was ruled in these our parts by one *Episcopus Cornubiensis*, whose abode was from time to time in divers monasteries, and particularly, as may be gathered from old testimonies, in Gerrans, in Saint Germans, and in Bodmin. After some time, in the person of Lyfing Bishop, the Diocese of Cornwall was united with the new-founded See of Crediton, wherein was a college of Canons, and thence speedily removed by King Edward, called the Confessor, to Exeter for the seat thereof, and furnished well with Canons secular, and the regular Canons of that place translated to the new Abbey of St. Peter, Westminster.

'After many years it seemed good to Her Most Religious and Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria to grant the prayer of many her faithful subjects, and to approve of their pious benefaction in this behalf, and accordingly, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in Parliament assembled, and by authority of the same, to restore and reconstitute, by founding of the

Bishopric of Truro, the old Diocese of Cornwall by itself, and to invest the Bishop thereof with all such rights, privileges, and jurisdictions as are possessed by any other Bishop in England, and to assign to such bishoprick, as a cathedral church the Church of St. Mary in Truro.'

Then after describing the statutes which are to follow, the Proem goes on:

'And if to any man it shall appear that of these statutes some things be left out which might have been well defined, and others definitely laid down which are of small moment, let him remember first that in some matters of even grave concern laudable custom ought to grow to have power of law, provided it be not contrariant to what is writ , . . and that diversely, in certain very small matters, experience hath taught that, if such like be not early defined, discrepancy doth lead to needless discussion, and vexation to hindrance in most weighty concerns, touching even the safe keeping of the flock of souls. Wherefore we have noticed how many ancient statutes in their preamble set forth the moment of peace and love in such like corporations and religious companies. . . . Not to serve themselves are Canons constituted, and not unto itself is the honour of a cathedral church. Discord and carefulness of trivial things are the snares by which they are soonest caught, and their eyes taken off from the wide want of the Church of God. Therefore do we reverently

and earnestly beseech them to remember the end of their ministry; and always to lay to heart that like . . . "Bishops are to know that their authority and jurisdiction in the Church is mainly committed to them for none other cause than that by their ministry and assiduity the greatest number possible of men may be joined unto Christ, and they that be Christ's already may grow and be built up in Him, and if any fall away they may be led back to the Shepherd the Lord Christ, and be renewed by healthful repentance," so also it has been witnessed in all times that "The clerks of cathedral churches ought to coalesce into one body with their Bishop, and bear part in his solicitude."'*

Brothers and sisters, we are able, or rather you are able, now to give vigorous and effective life—to a degree impossible before—to the calm, clear vision which Bishop Benson saw. If there be any bit of England—nay, if there be any bit of land in all the world—in which the venerable and misty past is associated with the living present and with the sunlit days that are to come hereafter, it is your diocese, it is Cornwall. You can go back to earlier days than we in other parts of England can—back to the dim, mysterious old times of cromlech, and big rough cairn, and curiously engraven cross; back to the story of King Arthur and his knights, a story whose root-fibres are twined about your granite hills, and

* See draft statutes in Report of Royal Commission, 1883.

whose fair flowers gathered from Lyonnesse or Tintagel blossom now—thanks to our own poet's nurturing and grafting care—in every English-speaking land; back to the quaint and mysterious hierarchy of Celtic saints and pioneers, whose names, scattered over hill and valley and rugged coast-line, are now linked, too, to these your Cathedral stalls—St. Piran and St. Buryan, St. Breaca and St. Teilo, St. Corentin, St. Meriadoc, St. Petroc, and the rest; back to Bishop Kenstec, the first to promise allegiance to Canterbury, and then on through Conan and Lyfing and Leofric, and many more—a story brimming over with stirring life and incident, until in unbroken line, Cornish or Devonian, we come to the man we knew and loved so well, sent to you here in the loving providence of God, six-and-twenty years ago, at a critical juncture in Cornwall's storied life.

Strange (or rather, to us believers, is it strange?) that he to whom was entrusted this holy task was he who as a little boy had steadily prayed—alone, I should think, among English schoolboys—that the days of cathedral-building might return. Would that he could see—may we not believe that he does see?—the magnificent fulfilment of those prayers to-day.

And yet, and yet, with all the grandeur of his vision, he was the very last who would regard a Cathedral—even a Cathedral such as this—as in itself the fulfilment, in itself the end, whereto he

looked and aimed. Let us be quite clear what we are about. We have—you have—with a generous and general self-sacrifice, as rare as it is inspiriting, completed in one short quarter of a century this great Cathedral. To quote the telling words of your own prayer, you have 'raised high in so fair sanctity this house of God's doctrine and service.' Its glorious nave is to be for ever associated with the name of Edward White Benson, Bishop of Truro and Archbishop of Canterbury. And now we have to regard it, not as an end accomplished, but as a beginning made.

'That ye may abound in hope.' Hope of what? Hope, surely, of seeing the kingdom of Jesus Christ upon earth go forward in the unborn days; hope of seeing more people here in Cornwall caring, more people praying, more people working, for 'whatsoever things are just and pure and lovely and of good report,' because of the Sacraments that are reverently and duly administered, and because of the prayers that are worthily offered, and because of the praises that are adequately and nobly sung, and because of the weighty words that are spoken within these hallowed walls as the months and years and centuries run on.

Yes, the God of hope fill you, and your children, and your children's children with all joy and peace in believing—the joy, that is, of quiet trustfulness in daily work, because we know in Whom we have

believed, and the peace of deliberate expectancy because of that belief—the belief which simply takes possession of the fortress and holds it against every foe.

Two friends stood, many years ago, we are told, in the Cathedral Church of Amiens. As their gaze ranged upward from the giant arches to the soaring roof, one of them—it was the German poet and philosopher Heine—said quietly: 'Opinions cannot build like that; convictions can.' So to-day. *Circumspice. Prospice.* 'That ye may abound in hope.'

In hope you have builded for days that are still far off, as well as for days that are nigh. Long centuries hence will men and women and little children stand under these arches—white now, but brown and age-worn then—and ask one another about the odd, old-fashioned, unenlightened folk who, in the Victorian days, and when the twentieth century began, were building the walls which will then be rich in hallowed association, of which as yet we scarce dare even to dream. Vain were it for us to picture to-day what England, what Cornwall, will look like then, or what people will say and think about our acts and words and the things which matter so intensely to us now. They will tell of the great Queen uniquely loved and reverenced, whose name is for ever linked with the central tower upbuilded in her memory by one noble gift, and of the Archbishop who had carried from Wellington to Lincoln, and from Lincoln to Cornwall, and from Cornwall to Lambeth, an interwoven

strength and grace which made his life, even in those ruder nineteenth-century days, a veritable inspiration, whereof the Cathedral is itself the most abiding testimony. And they will have more to say of how the thing was done, and the Cathedral nave was built and hallowed in the dawning days of science—in the very year, for example, when men had first learned the elemental task of flashing a wireless message across the Atlantic from these very Cornish shores whereon the old Cathedral stands.

Our poor vision fails as we try to peer eagerly onward into those far-off days. This at least I pray: that ye may now, on this very day, so solemn to us all, 'abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost,' and that the hope may shape itself in firm resolve that, for the sake of Him who died for you upon the wooden cross and who rose again, and is alive to-day, you will do what in you lies to use aright—to use in such manner as shall make it helpful to all around—the Cathedral which is now your possession and the heritage of your children. Here it stands, in the very centre of the city's life—not remote upon a hill or apart in a green garden of its own, but right in the very heart of your streets, its actual shadow falling daily upon the homes of men. Be it thus, for all the coming years, the very symbol of what our Church must be. It must stand in the very thick of life, and yet must tower above its petty dust and clamour; it must be fairer, graver, loftier

than the houses of men; it must point a finger upward in hope. That can come true. It is true in symbol; be it true in fact. It has been said a hundred times, but it must be said again to-day, that it is no light or unimportant thing that such a diocese as yours—a diocese rich in Cornwall's distinctive traditions of fervid and religous zeal—should have at its centre a holy house of God, undisputed in its pre-eminence, unrivalled in its massive beauty among all Cornish churches, wherein the ministry of Word and Sacrament can be surrounded and helped by all that is worthiest and most beautiful in the depth and range and dignity of music and of outward form—of all, in short, that reverence and culture can do to make the setting worthy of the jewel which it enshrines. You will look onward to making it even nobler and more beautiful as experience grows and holy associations link the inspiring grandeur of the sanctuary with the personal joys, and sorrows, and memories, and hopes of each generation of worshippers, rich and poor. You look onward to the growth of a spirit which shall better and better understand and prize these central forces and influences as they tell upon the widening circle of which your Cathedral Church is but the centre and the exemplar and the guide. To that glorious end may 'the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.'

XVIII. FAREWELL ADDRESS TO THE CLERGY OF ROCHESTER DIOCESE, 1895*

If a special service like this has any peculiar value—and who that knows the human heart would limit to-day its distinctive value for some of us?—it is because it sets us thinking about our sacred ministry, collective and individual: what it ought to be and what it actually is; how far we ministers of Christ are, together and severally, so bearing our part as to make the whole body, the whole corporate life, stronger, purer, more capable, more aglow, by reason of our place in it. It is thus that our thoughts and questionings should take shape when, as sometimes happens in our ministry, the turning of a page, the opening of a fresh chapter (a chapter not less sacred because it is modern) in the history of a parish or a diocese, gives us a 'new departure,' forces us to pause and face afresh, under the eye of the great *Pastor pastorum*, the solemn fact of our Divine

* St. Saviour's, Southwark, September 20, 1895.

commission, our imperishable heritage of trust and opportunity.

You and I, my brothers, have been called for a term of years to be fellow-labourers in a diocese which can reverently trace its history back to the days of Augustine's mission to the Kentish King; a diocese which has in some ways had more curious vicissitudes of change than any in England; a diocese which has now the high and sacred privilege of occupying, in the Church's battle array against ignorance and wrong, a foremost place of stress and toil and difficulty in such areas of anxious and perplexing poverty as surround us here to-day. 'Our' diocese, as I may still for a few hours call it, presents assuredly to the messenger of Christ some of the noblest and most inspiring opportunities to be found in Christendom. To the opportunities, thank God, already seized; to the new footholds already won, or being won, it has been ours—it is still yours—to add daily, until the boys and girls who fill our streets and schools to-day shall, as the men and women of twenty years hence, find it hard to believe that anyone could deliberately have used the phrase, so rife a little while ago, that Christianity 'was not in possession in South London.' May I say a few words to you as to the look of this, our campaign, from the point of view of one who has at least tried during these, to him, eventful years to keep in touch and sympathy, in every part of the field, with the

soldiers of Christ on whom the main brunt of the daily fight has fallen. It is surely not profitless at such an hour to try to generalize a little from the lessons and experiences of every day. Two facts, then, about our battle and its issue seem to me to grow clearer with every added month's experience.

The first is this. The force which really 'tells,' the work which really prevails against the foe, is that which is based upon a clear unflinching faith, definitely thought out, definitely held—the Christian Creed in action. When we are told, in the frequent phraseology of the hour, that the best, clearest-headed, and most practical sort of men no longer need, or, at all events, no longer use as a motive to action, the definite doctrines of the Christian faith; that dogma is discredited nowadays; and that the truest philanthropy, the best sort of altruism, the highest self-sacrifice, the noblest 'service of man,' are, in practice, independent of any such sanction or impetus, our answer is not difficult. Look round our streets, where conditions are darkest and hardest, and then in quiet fairness let the plain results speak. I do not mean merely that the man of devout and reverent soul has a source of strength and courage that others have not. Thank God, even among those who work on other than definitely religious lines, there are in abundance men of reverent soul, and we claim for Christian workers no monopoly of such a spirit. The point rather is this:

Multiplying experience enables us to say with confidence that for corporate work of the best and most lasting sort, in things secular as well as sacred, we must look to those men, to those parishes, whose whole work is based and centred every day upon the definite teaching, the clear, firm holding, of the Christian faith as embodied and proclaimed in the Church's ministry of word and Sacrament; that width of sympathy will never make up for shallowness of belief; nay, that that very width of sympathy ought itself to be the outcome of a coherent, clear-cut faith. The Gospel message of Him who lived and died and rose again, that message set forth in the creeds of Christendom, is, in the long-run (let men explain it how they will), the thing that tells, the truth that wears and lasts, the cause that wins. For us, of course, it must be so. It is what the Lord Himself said should come about. Go back in thought to the last night of His life. He tells His followers what it is, Who it is, that shall convince the world when He is gone, and how the conviction is to come. 'When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from the Father, He shall bear witness of Me.' The work is to be His, to testify of Christ, to bring the message to the homes and hearts of men and women and children. And how? By the ministry of men—his accredited messengers and stewards—'Ye also shall

bear witness.' Yes, and that witness must prevail. The world is to be convinced, He says (convinced, that is, through us His ministers), in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment—'of judgment because the Prince of this world is judged.' Matters are to be brought to the test. Right and wrong are to become clear, and the testing force is to be the Gospel of Jesus Christ—nothing less or lower, nothing vague, or indefinite, or uncertain. The Prince of this world is judged—hath been judged.

The issue of that crisis, that testing judgment, so far as our work here in England is concerned, grows clearer every day. On the one side the force, the influence, the system that would do without Christ, that would trust to other sanctions which, though largely Christian, it thinks to be its own; and, on the other side, the force, the influence, the system which is clearly, definitely, distinctively Christian, and says so every day. Brothers, it is thus, it is on this side, that we are set to serve, commissioned by our crucified and risen Lord to minister His word, His Sacraments, in the strength of God the Holy Ghost. Do we do it always as those who are quite sure that their cause is conquering, as He said it must? If not, we are missing the meaning of the facts before our eyes, facts which, however we explain them, must, I think, be admitted by every impartial man who will be at the pains to look and judge. I

should not like to go away from this diocese without testifying publicly to 'that I do know and have seen,' to the fact, namely, that here in South London it is just where Christian teaching, doctrinal teaching—'dogmatic' teaching, if you will—has been most clear and outspoken and definite and brave, that the work—what some would call the 'secular' work—tells and lasts, and that homes and lives are growing purer and brighter and happier than of old.

And then, another principle, or rather another evident fact, the outcome, too, of quiet experience. You know it well, but I am constrained to recall it to your thoughts to-day. There is a resistless force in eloquence; there is an inspiration in the hot enthusiasm of some public protest against cruelty, or apathy, or wrong; there are occasions for forcing—yes, forcing—upon the notice of those 'outside' the claims of the poor, the ignorant, the suffering, whom we are set to serve for Christ. We thank God to-day for all to whom these special powers and aptitudes are given. 'There are diversities of gifts,' and the Church enlists them every one. But above and before all these, what tells, what in the end prevails, is the quiet persistence, the regular daily devotion of those whose lives are given for Christ's sake to the service of those for whom Christ died. Let him whose experience is largest and longest of those gathered here to-day try to recall in a quiet hour who among the friends and fellow-workers he

has known have seemed when the end came to have practically done most good, and he will wonder—or perhaps he will not wonder—to find that comparatively few of them have possessed in any marked degree such powers as stir enthusiasm at first sight, or take listeners captive at a word. In the work of the ministry, as in the ways of common life, the things that really matter, the things on which most depends, are the things of every day. From one point of view how utterly depressing are the conditions of work in some of the parishes within a mile of us at this moment! From another and a higher point of view, how grand the hopes, how rich the promise, to those who are steadfastly faithful to such a trust! Let me suggest a sacred parallel with other days. You remember the buoyant hopefulness, the ring of approaching triumph with which the great Evangelical prophet describes the invincible strength of Israel's quiet trust in her living God amid conditions which might seem to crush hope altogether. He is speaking to a band of exiles whose lives are being ground in ruthless servitude upon the Babylonian plain, among the countless captives of other lands and tongues, set, like themselves, 'to sigh out their patriotisms into the tyrant's mud and mortar.' Yet the prophet bates not a jot of his confidence. He quietly bids them fix their eyes upon the issue, and take hope in the sustaining guidance, the assured presence, of the Lord their God. Jehovah's

character is to be their pledge, the pledge of coming victory.

'Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary. He giveth power to the weak, and to him that hath no might He increaseth strength. . . . They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.'

Mount up with wings as eagles—run and not be weary—walk and not faint. Soar—run—walk. Can the order be right? Does it seem an anti-climax? Some of us will recall how a notable teacher of to-day has shown us, on the contrary, that it is a natural and true order 'rising from the easier to the more difficult, from the ideal to the real, from dream to duty, from what can only be the rare occasions of life to what must be life's usual and abiding experience.'*

First the ideal—thank God for that. Then the rush at it with hot enthusiasm—an enthusiasm blest of God and fruitful of abundant good. Then 'the daily trudge onward, when some of the splendour has faded from the view, but is all the more closely wrapped round the heart.' Glorious as it is to take

* See Principal George Adam Smith on Isaiah, vol. ii., pp. 102-105.

some practical crisis of life by storm, the help that God our Father can and does give us in the surroundings of such work as ours is seen and felt yet more when we are set upon 'the life-long tramp of earth's common surface, without fresh wings of dream, or the excitement of rivalry, or the attraction of reward, but with the head cool and the face forward, and every footfall upon firm ground.'

'In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.' 'Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.' By My Spirit. That *must* be there, whatever else be lacking, if our ministry is to reach the level of our aim and prayer. *Quod faxit Deus.*

My brothers, I have said no word, I have suggested no thought to-day but such as were already yours. The simplest things are those which ring most true at an hour when the heart is full. It can be no light matter to any man to close an eventful epoch in his ministry, and, as he says farewell to those who have in every sense been to him brothers indeed, to be forced to remember his own weakness, his faintheartedness, his lack of service. Upon such thoughts I deliberately do not dwell to-day. I think rather of our common prayers and hopes and expectations, our firm assurance that they will yet come true, our knowledge that no stroke of honest work for God, and especially such work as is unmarked of men, but must some day tell. 'Whatsoever is born of God

overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.' To me, the varied memories of these years, in health and sickness, the sacred friendships, the fruitful counsel, the united work, must be fraught, please God, with blessing while life lasts. We have together striven, and not fruitlessly, to make much of our diocesan fellowship and its corporate life. To-day we are helped to remember the yet larger brotherhood of joint endeavour and closely linked prayers which will still include and unite us all.

In no other church in England so appropriately as here in St. Saviour's could we have met for this special Eucharist to-day. Here the two dioceses unite the stream of their historic life. Great traditions of the See of Winchester find expression and record on these walls. Lancelot Andrewes sleeps beside us, and the home of the long series of Bishops who loom so large in English history was in great part here. Well, changes come, new links are fashioned, new boundary lines are drawn, and in nothing has Rochester shown more manfully its high resolve to meet the modern needs of our great invertebrate South London, than in the brave rebuilding of this House of God, to be a living centre, for long years to come, of every banded effort which the Church can make to overcome the surrounding ignorance and apathy and sin. Here pre-eminently has the strong Bishop, whom I am now called for

the second time to follow, left the impress of his courage, his hopefulness, his stimulating zeal.* It is reserved for yet a third Bishop† to preside over the completion of our work, and to inaugurate the recovered life of this great Collegiate Foundation. It will be but one task out of many which await him in this diocese, dear to every one of us. With a thankful heart I commend him to your prayers. Learn at Oxford and at Leeds his character, his strength, his self-devotion, and let their generous sense of loss be the measure of our gain. Give him from the first, give him now, the support of your daily prayers. No one knows more gratefully than I what that support means. And as in our Eucharistic prayer and praise we join at this hour with all the company of heaven, let every thought of severance here on earth be merged in the inspiring sense of a living fellowship which outlasts time and which is sealed for ever as we kneel side by side at the Table of the Lord.

* Anthony Wilson Thorold, Bishop of Rochester, 1877-1891.

† Edward Stuart Talbot, Bishop of Rochester, 1895.

XIX. BRITISH MEDICAL CONGRESS, PORTSMOUTH*

Freely ye have received, freely give.

St. Matt. x. 8.

The words come down to us coupled with others which might seem more obviously appropriate to our service to-day. The whole verse runs thus—'Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils,' and then—'freely ye have received, freely give.'

But it is not mainly because of that context that I choose them now. It is because they embody what seems to me the foremost thought which such a gathering as this suggests—the greatness of the trust and therefore of the responsibility given to those whose life-work it is to deal with the 'lives,' or in other words with the 'health and well-being,' of other men.

* Preached to the members of the Congress, Portsea Parish Church, August 1, 1899.

The Son of Man (greatest of the sons of men, yet differing absolutely from them all) is commissioning His emissaries, the agents by means of whom His message is to go forward on the earth. He shows them how their powers, rightly used, are to 'tell' everywhere for good. It came true. They did so tell for good. Our presence here this morning as people of what was at first called 'the Way'—Christ's 'Way'—is part of the result.

I am not specially dwelling now on what are known as their 'miraculous' powers, but rather on the men and their work as a whole, a work which was nothing less than setting about—in His Name, in His strength—the mending of the world. It was, I suppose, the greatest trust ever given to mortal men. Its very greatness, the incomparable 'gift,' as we rightly call it, of influencing, changing, healing, uplifting, upbuilding other people's lives (bodies, remember, as well as spirits) was to inspire them to use it rightly. They were trusted: let them answer to the trust. 'Freely ye have received, freely give.'

There can, I think, be nobody in this congregation, of all congregations, who has not been struck by the importance of the part taken by bodily cures in the Gospel's start among men. Something was happening in the world at that hour of its history unlike anything that had happened before, and the foremost thing people saw and talked about, before going

farther or deeper, was that sick folk were made well, lame and paralyzed limbs got back their strength, lepers were healed, sanity returned to those 'possessed,' and so on. That was not all. Far from it. It went a long way, and no impartial man who quietly studies the records with critical care will doubt that (for a little time at least) it occurred on a wide scale, and that it profoundly impressed those who saw and heard; but, after all, it was only one part of a far larger whole, and the trust given to those men—express it in what terms you will—was a weightier and more solemn 'gift' by far than that alone. What depended on them was beyond all reckoning. It was infinitely greater than they themselves yet knew.

To discuss its character would lead us away from my point. I merely take these words of Christ's charge to them as a sort of motto or proverb for any such commission either then or since, and I invite you to apply it in thought for a few minutes to what is happening in England now—to what underlies our gathering here this week.

I am told that not infrequently at the opening service of the Medical Congress the preacher has felt it natural to make his words turn upon the relation of religious belief to scientific thought and discovery. I am myself neither qualified nor ambitious to soar so high. That all truth is one and comes from God, and that some day, somewhere, we shall

see and understand the relation of its various parts, the confluence of its various contributory streams, I believe with all my heart and soul; but I incline to think that, in ordinary hands like mine, endeavours to formulate what are called 'reconciliations' and 'harmonies' of this sort are apt to present new difficulties of their own, and may easily start as many problems as they solve. I ask you rather to stand beside me on the dusty platform of our daily life, and to consider practically and perhaps prosaically our call to duty and our way of doing it. 'Freely ye have received, freely give.' Our own, we are reminded on every side, is a critical time in English history—nay, in the wider history of Christendom.

All times, I suppose, have been critical, and ours has, no doubt, peculiar crises of its own—a time when the flowing tide of knowledge about the physical facts of life has been almost swamping us in its successive waves, ten times more rapid in their inrush than ever before; a time, too, of new plans, fresh ideals, resettings of old faiths, whether secular or sacred; and none know so well as you to whom I speak what expenditure in stress and wear and fret for everybody these eager years involve.

Great—superlatively great—and anxious, at such a time, is the responsibility of those on whom is laid the task of guiding, moulding, stimulating, steadying, each eager impulse, each high enthusiasm, each corporate or individual effort to conquer what is bad,

or to mend what is amiss, or to uphold what is decayed or trodden down.

Two sets of men stand perforce to the front among those from whom such counsel and guidance are fairly expected—the members of my profession and the members of yours. We may be personally unequal to the task. We are at all events bound, to the very best of our power, to answer to the 'call'—the 'calling'—and to discharge the trusteeship given us to hold and use.

Am I wrong in saying that the men who are specially trusted just now are the men who have made the characteristic acquisitions of the age in which we have grown up their own: the acquisitions pre-eminently of what is vaguely and roughly called 'physical science'? Gentlemen, that lofty privilege, that sacred trust, is yours.

Never in England so markedly as now did intelligent people—just in proportion to their own culture and intelligence—turn towards and listen to the man or the pupils of the man who has unlocked hidden secrets of physical life—who,

> Not incurious in God's handiwork,*

has correlated observed facts and set them in ordered shape before all who care to look and listen. And people do care. It is not like the helpless, timorous, blind allegiance which, in the Europe of old days or

* Browning, 'Epistle of Karshish.'

in the Africa of our own, has stricken credulous folk into awestruck reverence for the mysterious maker of horoscope or talisman, the wizard or the 'Medicine man.' Nay, it is the very opposite of that. It is the intelligent man's loyal tribute of allegiance to him who, instead of shrouding himself and his handiwork in mystery, as the ancient alchemist did, has transmuted into current coin the hidden treasures which encompass us, who has taught us plainly something more about the unseen forces which control and condition our everyday life.

And that allegiance, paid, say, to a Jenner, or a Darwin, or a Simpson, or a Huxley, or a Kelvin, or a Lister, or a Pasteur, or a Virchow—you can extend the list far better than I can—is now a factor of huge import to the daily life of England. It is an allegiance that is yearly growing in volume and significance. It means this. A generation in which the handiwork of God, as seen in the growth and development of life, has been studied and revealed as it never was before, turns brightly, hopefully, trustfully, to its teachers and asks them—often perhaps unreasonably—to guide and counsel it in other things as well, if indeed they be 'other things,' and not just a larger range of the same knowledge of Him in whom are all things, and by whom all things, whether in heaven or earth, subsist. And if that confidence be real and growing—as it certainly is—the responsibility grows too for him in whom the

confidence is reposed. The trust committed to you is incalculably great. Rise to it. It is itself an uplifting thing. 'Freely ye have received, freely give.'

It is one of the glories of your great profession to recognize no esoteric circle, no privileged monopoly in the ownership of secret arts or alchemies. What one acquires is for the immediate good of all. Let that come true also in the yet larger field of common life, wherein your part is so noteworthy and can be made (quite apart from healing skill) so fruitful for the general weal.

If the age in which we have most of us grown to manhood and spent our earlier energies is to be known in history as an age of physical science, it seems not unlikely that social science, in the widest meaning of the term, may be the distinctive imprint of the years with which another century begins. And for guidance, as that age buds and opens, people will look in no small measure to the men, and the disciples of the men, who have stamped their 'character' (in the true sense)—their seal's impress—upon the popular thought and teaching of the last few decades of our people's life.

It almost must be so, whether in the community at large or in our several homes. Once earn the confidence of those with whom you have to do, and the field in which you are to use it widens fast. It would not be difficult, I think, to see how this must work—is already working—in our public life. But

take a humbler object-lesson from any average English household. Two men, and two men only, the clergyman and the doctor, have access from outside to its inmost life, its darkened sick-room, its domestic joys and jars and sorrows, its hours of bereavement or anxiety or repented sin, its cupboard skeletons, its founts of hidden happiness or hope.

Of the duties, privileges, responsibilities of the ordained minister of Christ I purposely say nothing to-day. They are, thank God, real and inspiring, but they lie outside our present purview, and there are cases not a few in which the counsel of the layman will certainly be more readily sought and followed than that of the parish priest, be he who he may. Look at it, then, not relatively, but positively. That confidence widens as it grows, and a score of things—my friends, I speak that I do know—will come, by no wish, or plan, or even knowledge of yours, to turn upon what is, or is supposed to be, your counsel or your opinion.

Just so with larger matters than the life of a middle-class home. See it on the widest scale in the social problems which beset and baffle us, and remember that in every such effort it is for the common good of our families and homes that we are caring and striving. We want those who are now little children to find in middle life—say when the first quarter of the new century has struck—that a

higher level of truth and purity, of self-restraint and manly courage, has been reached, a nobler standard upheld in the average English household and family.

In the words of Bishop Westcott, foremost among the Christian prophets of our time: 'The family and not the man is the unit of humanity.' 'The thirty years of silent, unnoticed labour at Nazareth teach us, if we ponder over the meaning, what the home may be, and, in God's counsel is.' 'It is in the family that the future of a people is shaped.' Yes, and on you, my friends, rests in no small degree the shaping of it.

Take one example: it is the most visible by far. The foulest mark which is smeared upon upper and middle-class life in modern England is the rank stain of impurity. You know as well as I do the variety of plans afoot for our cleansing, and how comparatively worthless our doughtiest efforts will still be until, by the grace of God, we have got a higher level of opinion behind us in the home life and intercourse of every day, a higher standard accepted by the average man—above all, by the average young man. And, honestly, whose words in that connection matter most, 'tell' most, affect most? Your words and influence, as medical men, who are at the same time trusted friends, or ours as clergy? Nobody doubts for a moment what to answer. Never mind why. Let it be, if you will, the fault of the clergy. At any rate it is the

fact, and the fact is significant and pointed to-day. 'Trust' spells 'responsibility,' 'answerableness.' May God help you to find new ways of using that high truth for the manifold service of English life! 'Freely ye have received, freely give.'

The instance I have given is direct and practical. We can find others, if we will, less obvious, but equally true.

We are face to face, in our rural parishes especially, with educational problems of a vital sort. How long is England to go on acquiescing in the palpable absurdity of our educating little boys and girls with might and main until they are just capable, say at twelve years old, of beginning to realize what it is for, and then stopping short and turning them adrift to forget in furrow and hedgerow, in twelve months at the outside, what they are supposed to have learned in those brief and crowded years? Friends, we clergy by ourselves cannot mend that, strive as we may. Our words are unfairly discounted for more reasons than one. You can go far towards mending it, if you will let people know what you feel about it, what you see in it from a rather different point of view. The true wealth of a land is men, not merchandise. You, if you will think it out and say it out, can help us to get men and women worth having; can help us to make a true human life possible for the labourer; to secure that he shall not receive as the price of

early years of work a mutilated and impoverished manhood.

I have but fingered the fringe of the many problems that condition our daily common life. They are problems that must be soluble—as we at least believe—in one way only, by bringing them into touch with the living, week-day, working Gospel of Him who knew, who knows, what is in man.

There are men—I doubt not there are men here to-day—who, while they feel this, would shrink from saying it in so many words: yet men the Christian motive of whose life is real in God's sight—so real as to become instinctive.

> 'With that deep insight which detects
> All great things in the small,
> And knows how each man's life affects
> The spiritual life of all,
> He walked by faith and not by sight,
> By love and not by law;
> The presence of the wrong or right
> He rather felt than saw.'*

I think I understand not only the reverent inclination to reticence and reserve which the average educated Englishman feels in the things which concern his faith, but the intrinsic value of that reticence and reserve. I understand and I respect it. But, brothers, there must be no such reticence when we are on our knees alone with God. If our Christian

* Whittier, 'The Quaker of the Olden Time,' 2.

faith be true at all, it is in its strength that battles can be fought, that victories can be won.

The Lord is trusting us, commissioning us, endowing us in our several ways. The sacred trust, the personal commission, the endowment of knowledge and skill, are meant for a use wider, farther-reaching perhaps, than we always remember.

'Freely ye have received, freely give.'

XX. TO THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF ODDFELLOWS, FOLKESTONE*

Thy kingdom come.

St. Matt. vi. 10.

Whatever else brings us here to-day, my friends, whatever motive or purpose be ours besides, we are at all events here as Christians. Christ is our King. We want His Kingdom to come. We want it to spread on earth for earth's bettering, and every time we say our prayers we ask that that may come to pass: 'Thy Kingdom come.' In what capacity, and by what right, do we make that prayer? And what, after all, do we mean by it? We mean that we are all God's children. We said so when we began our prayer: 'Our Father.' As children of God, as citizens of His Kingdom, we ask that it may come on earth, that it may spread and grow, and that we,

* Preached in the Parish Church, Folkestone, on Whit-Sunday, May 19, 1907.

by our separate lives and by our common life, may set it forwar . 'We do not pray,' it has been well said—'we do not pray for the establishment of some abstrac principle of right and justice, with which we have no concern save a general interest, but for the power and the grace to help, each in his own way, to establish right and justice and truth as being our own concern: as things in which we are personally interested, and have the best right to be interested, because we are sons of Him whose rule is righteous and just. The setting up of His Kingdom is, in a word, a co-operative movement.'* Having got this force behind us, let us look farther. Is God's Kingdom to come now, or is it something for which we must wait till hereafter? Will it only begin really at death, or is it to begin here and now? I answer quite unhesitatingly, here and now. Again, it does not mean merely—perhaps not mainly—that men shall become religious, and find their own salvation. It means something greater, namely, that they shall come to their full powers, bodily, intellectual, spiritual; that nothing may hinder their full growth; that all obstacles to it may be removed. We ask that God our King may be recognized as reigning not only in Churches, or in people's souls, but in States and communities and societies of men. We want the prayer to be offered by the statesman who directs the foreign or the

* Eyton, 'The Lord's Prayer,' p. 40.

colonial policy of a nation, by the Member of Parliament as he goes to the House of Commons, by the magistrate or the municipal worker, by the social reformer, or the officer or member of a Friendly Society; we want him to make the request as something which definitely and practically concerns him and his work. 'Thy Kingdom come,' and may I, and I, and I, be so guided by our Lord as to help to make it come. People will offer the prayer, too, in different spirits, according to their personal temperament or their surroundings. The sanguine and cheery and hopeful will have one meaning or expectation in offering it; the cautious and duller-minded people will have another. There are some who cannot bring themselves to believe in any real tangible bettering of human life and its conditions on a great scale here and now, who think that we must wait until hereafter, when our faith is realized, as it will be, in another world, which is still mysterious and out of sight. There are some, and I thank God for it, who definitely expect and hope and mean that by God's good hand upon us, and in answer to our prayers, and in fellowship with our work, the Kingdom shall come, and their every effort will be devoted to making the prayer come true in that part of God's world at least with which they personally and now have to do.

And that brings us straight to our special thoughts about this service to-day. A great Congress like

this is a large and important fact in the contemporary life of England. It matters a great deal for the common progress and the public good, and nothing could be sounder in purpose and more appropriate in act than that we should inaugurate the week's Conference by gathering here in the House of God for quiet thanksgiving, for firm and reverent resolve, and for deliberate and expectant prayer. Do you know the wonderful history of this church in which we are assembled?* It goes back and back to the very outset of the history of England, when there was a separate Kingdom of Kent, and when the larger part of England was still heathen. It has a continuous history of about 1,300 years. These very walls are, in part, about eight centuries old, and day by day, and week by week, throughout all those generations, people have come here with their joys, and their sorrows, and their hopes, to ask His help and blessing, and to find it in the ordered ministry of word and Sacrament. This year you have chosen this old sea-board town for your great gathering, and in opening the week's work with this service you are following the example set by the men of old, who, when they founded a society, or guild, or brotherhood, for fellowship in trade or labour, or for mutual service of a social

* The existing parish church of SS. Mary and Eanswythe, Folkestone, dates from A.D. 1137, but it has relics belonging to the first half of the seventh century.

sort, based it all from the start upon a religious foundation, and thus commended it to God as something which, if rightly used, ought to help to make His Kingdom come. Because of the office which I hold in this country and in Kent, I have been invited to speak to you here to-day, to bid you God-speed, to join my prayers with yours that the Divine Spirit may guide your deliberations, and lead you into and in the way of truth. Your life and mine are brimful of work, too much so, perhaps, to leave us sufficient time for thought, and so it is a good thing that on the Sunday which precedes your consultations—especially when it is Whit-Sunday, the day of God the Holy Spirit's gift—we should meet quietly to put it all before our Father in heaven. As I consider the work and progress of a great democratic organization such as this, I cannot but feel that a good deal turns upon its annual congress. By such a yearly congress in a provincial town—now that ease of travel makes it possible to bring the members together in a different place each year—you do set people thinking, now in one part of England and now in another, what, after all, our great friendly societies are for, and what part they ought to play in life—the wholesome life—of a democratic age. Let us ask ourselves to-day: What is the true worth of a congress such as this, first to the whole Order, and then to the individual members?

Look back; look round; look forward. Do we

always realize that one of our first thoughts should be thankfulness to other people, to our ancestors and predecessors in this work? You know as well as I do how grave were the difficulties they had to face. It is hard sometimes, but it is most wholesome, for us to get face to face with the plain facts of the industrial life which preceded the changes of, say, seventy years ago. The more ardent spirits of that day, between the close of the great French war in 1815 and the accession of Queen Victoria in 1837, realizing the wretchedness of the common lot, strove in a score of different ways to improve the social and economic condition of their fellow-countrymen. They thought, they planned, they toiled; they preached some theory of improvement. They sacrificed themselves; they died, some in poverty, some crushed by disappointment at the strange combination of two things—the ingratitude and apathy of so many of their fellow-working men, and the supercilious or callous indifference of so many of the better-to-do people. Those of us who look back upon the efforts which those pioneers made—men whose very names are forgotten except by a handful of students—can thank God for their lives of fruitful self-sacrifice. They were of the heroic sort, 'which loves Heaven's silence more than fame.' Some of their plans and efforts may now look to us crude and mistaken. But we are coming to see and appreciate the purity of their purpose and the

straightness of their aim. They laboured and passed away, and as we enter into their labours we ask God to give us, in the blaze of fuller light and knowledge, a corresponding simplicity and purity and strength.

And then we look forth—you look forth—upon the living facts of to-day. It would be inappropriate, or even impertinent, for me, who know the present-day details so much less closely than you do, to dogmatize as to what is going right or going wrong. You, the experts and leaders in the great Friendly Society movement, know, far better than I can, not only the financial stability of the Order and the soundness of the several lodges, but also (and this is the important point) the relation which exists between the Society as a whole and the individual members. Association, if it means anything worthy, means self-surrender for the common good. I ask a question which I cannot answer, but each man can, in some degree, answer it for himself. Am I, to the full, serving my day and generation in this great Order by giving that social service of the best sort which God looks for at my hands? Is that service rendered, not chiefly for securing my own future, like a great insurance system, but in order that the Society as a body may live and grow in the healthiest way possible? You can severally answer that question. I cannot do it for you.

Then, thirdly, we must look forward. The con-

ditions of modern life in England change so rapidly from year to year that it is only the rashest or the most ignorant who will dare to prophesy with any assurance. I do not think that anybody can say in what way associated effort is likely to be best able in the coming years to promote the well-being of England. I will not cross the border-line, and trench upon matters of controversy. But this is certain: These subjects are now being thought out by some of the clearest brains in the country, and a solemn responsibility rests upon us all to observe closely, to study fairly, to speak honestly, and, for our children's sake, to contribute our quota of manly, straightforward endeavour to the wise solution of present-day problems. It is very easy to let matters drift, and to bid other people do the thinking and the planning that is necessary. Or, again, it is very easy to think simply of our own personal interests in the matter, and to act accordingly. To do either is to belie the very purpose of this great Order, which is set here for the task of helping to solve these perplexities, and of joining hands in doing it. Nobody who understands our modern life can have any doubt that in the coming task of close grappling with the big questions of social progress, of the incidence and distribution of wealth, and of our responsibilities—domestic, territorial, or central—for our weaker folk, the sickly and the unfortunate and the old, the great Friendly Societies have a vitally

important part to play. You who constitute this great Society wield in these matters an influence in England which is almost immeasurable in its possibilities. God give you grace so to exercise it as to advance His Kingdom upon earth, the Kingdom of real righteousness and public spirit, of tender, reverent sympathy and care for human sorrow and suffering. We are trusted—trusted by God—with the care of those on whom those burdens lie. When Jesus Christ was amongst us upon earth, He cared for them most of all—the weary and the wayworn and the sick, the very young, the very old. Yes, and the tempted and the sin-stained, too. And He bids us care as He did. It is the rule, the underlying principle, of His Kingdom among men—Thy Kingdom come.

I come now to my last point. It is a simple and obvious truism. But the value of truisms is constantly overlooked, especially while we are young. How did a truism become so? It was a truth repeated so often that at last it became commonplace. It is a truth, then, to say that this great Order of Oddfellows is—is what?—is what its several members choose to make it. In our common life, if things are amiss, it is not enough to say that it is somebody else's fault, not ours. In the old days, before the great Reform Bill, men used to turn round and blame the Government whenever they were confronted by some obvious social wrong. It

has taken us some time to learn it, or to fashion it out, but we are learning now that in the England of to-day the responsibility for the continuance of known wrong things rests in its degree upon us all. I speak as man to men, and ask you: Do we all and each realize our personal responsibility for what, by voice, or vote, or influence, we do or leave undone?

'There is a great deal of human nature among men,' and in human nature there is a great deal of sheer laziness. Most people hate worry, and many a man feels—in the affairs of a community, or a society, or a municipality, or a county, or a nation—feels, though he does not say it—let so and so do it; I will look on. The member of a common life who knowingly does this is, to speak frankly, an idle and somewhat despicable person; but we come across a good many such—that, at least, is my experience—in the various walks of life. A congress like this will do untold good if it sends away every member, as he goes back to his Lodge, resolved that so far as in him lies he is going to discharge to the full the trust of membership, and is going to use it thoughtfully and deliberately for the common good. The consequence of that, the outcome of that, in the nation's life needs no explanation from me.

Every self-governing society is a training-ground of 'democracy' in the true and noble sense of that word, the responsible guidance of the nation's life by

the people of the nation as a whole. Democracy, in that true sense, is wholesomely insisting more and more that duties which have hitherto been done, or left undone, by individuals, shall be discharged by popularly elected men, the representatives of their fellow-countrymen. Everything has for a long time been tending that way, and we who wish to see it so are startled and depressed every now and then by the unfaithfulness which elected men may show to their high trust. Thoughtful people are asking, when such an incident occurs, who is to blame, and what is the cause? I think that one answer to that question, one explanation of such calamitous failure when it comes, is found in the lack of adequate training-grounds for the exercise of democratic trust, schools of grown-up life wherein men may learn the strength and the weakness of democratic or popular administration. We hear it said sometimes that democracy, whatever it may do in law-making, is never at its best in administration, that one really able man is worth twenty second-rate men; and so on. The remedy, then, is to get the best men to the front, and by degrees to make indispensable and certain this condition—that the individual, the chosen man, cares whole-heartedly for the society to which he belongs, be it a nation, or a municipality, or a board of guardians, or a voluntary association. Expressed in other language, absolutely right and true, he must realize that he is, by his election, put into the

position of being a 'fellow-worker with God' for the bettering of the world. God works through men, and he is one of those men. The Kingdom of God cannot come till men are eagerly working for its coming. Help, in God's name, to make the prayer come true.

> 'We must be here to work,
> And men who work can only work for men,
> And, not to work in vain, must comprehend
> Humanity, and so work humanly,
> And raise men's bodies still, by raising souls.'*

These are ideals, but they are Christ's ideals, and therefore they can come true. We mean, please God, that they shall. 'Thy Kingdom come.'

If the principles which inspire and underlie this huge Society, this vast implement for men's bettering, are sound and true, as we believe they are, we want them to spread, and it must be ours to spread them. We must get people to see that what we are striving after, as members in such a body, is not mainly our own gain, but the gain of the whole Christian community whereof we are members, a community of service which will be the stronger and the worthier because it has at its core societies such as this, with high ideals and a determination to carry them out. High ideals; we want our manhood to be worthier. It must be pure. We must kill, or strive to kill, the cowardly and cruel customs which let men off easily

* 'Aurora Leigh' (Ed. 1882), p. 398.

for the despicable selfishness which gratifies ignoble passion and leaves the penalty to fall upon those who are weaker than ourselves. And our manhood must be temperate. We know in what direction the nation's weakness lies, and we must set ourselves to wage war in social life and usages where war is needed most. And our manhood must be chivalrous to the weakly, and the tender, and the faint-hearted, and the poor. Do we always, in such corporate effort as this Society undertakes, bear them adequately in mind? You know better than I whether any warning is needed there. Forward, then, in all these ways, and may the Divine King Himself be your strength and stay! The battles we are set to wage against the forces of greed and laziness, and selfishness and wrong, are not easy things. They need strong men. It is no rosewater fight to which we are called. 'Men,' it has been well said, 'who are not afraid of bugbears, and do not shrink back in cowardly inaction, because others are wild and extravagant, or agitate for impossibilities, those are the men who advance the Kingdom of God in States. There is nothing really so cowardly or contemptible as the attitude which, in the face of admitted evils, will not bestir itself, lest it seem to favour wild and impossible schemes; for, be it remembered, such schemes draw all the strength and influence that they possess from the existence of those admitted evils (impurity and greed, and intemperance and the

rest), which timidity will not endeavour to cure. The advocates of swift, unsparing revolution are among us, but their true mission is not to frighten us into inaction, which gives them all their force, but to make us resolved to rise to the Christian conception—namely, that it is the duty of the nation, as being itself an ordinance of God, to promote that Kingdom which was not founded on force, but on truth and righteousness, and which is never powerless, save when it forgets its watchwords. As we gain a truer conception of the claims of the Christian Church, in the widest sense of that word, so we gain a true conception of the functions of the Christian state, and of every great brotherhood and society within its bounds.'

And so again I bid you God-speed. We have joined to-day in the old Whitsuntide prayer that God the Holy Ghost would give to us a right judgment in all things. May that power be abundantly answered for you in the deliberations of these eventful days, and in the resolves which follow from them. And what is true for the whole community is true for each several member of it. To do good is to take personal trouble, both in our deliberations and in our everyday life. Every Christian man who says 'Thy Kingdom come' is bound to be at work in some way or other for that advance.

XXI. THE OBSERVANCE OF SUNDAY*

None of us liveth to himself.

ROMANS XIV. 7.

I AM going to preach a sermon about Sunday, and I purposely take a text which seems to have—and has—no such limited reference, because I want to lay stress upon the important truth that the Sunday question is only part of a very much wider question which concerns us all without one single exception. We shall never understand the Sunday question rightly till we take that in.

Where does this text occur? 'None of us liveth to himself.' St. Paul is drawing to an end the longest of his letters. A great many of his readers are Jewish people, who have been brought up, as he was, from childhood as religious people, who have inherited from their parents religious usages which they have taken as matters of course, without much

* Parish Church, Croydon, March 10, 1907.

thought about it, and whose religious faith comes down from the earliest days of their national life. He has learned for himself, and brought to them a new message about the love of the Lord God whom they were always taught to reverence, His love revealed in Jesus Christ, and the fundamental 'deep-down' difference which that has made to the world.

He has been trying all through his long letter to explain to those Jewish readers what the difference is—the difference, as we sometimes roughly express it, between law and gospel. And here, near the end of the letter, he comes to the question of the observance of rules, grand old rules which had meant much in their nation's life, rules about eating and drinking and the observance of days. He knows that they will be bewildered as to whether—and if so how—they are to make those old rules fit into the new life of Christ's society. And he finds (at least, so I think) that they would like him to lay down for them some new rules as definite and particular as the old ones, only less burdensome, because the Gospel yoke ought to be easier, they think, than the yoke of the law. And St. Paul practically says that he will do nothing of the kind. Christ had laid down for them *principles* rather than clear-cut rules—principles which they must themselves take the responsibility of fashioning into conduct. Did they think this would be an easier, lighter task than the bondage of the old Mosaic rules? On the contrary,

it would be, in this sense, more difficult, that it would throw on them more responsibility. It would call for more exercise of judgement, as contrasted with mere obedience. They would need the spirit of wisdom and understanding. They would have to look in quite a new, because a larger and freer, sense for the personal guidance to each one of them of God the Holy Spirit. About two things He is quite clear. The trust given to them is greater than before, just because the choice left them is more free. And next? They must not—they dare not—in fashioning those principles into conduct, think only of themselves, of what would be helpful, or practical, or profitable, for each man's own life. They are members of a living society, Christ's society on earth. Its well-being turns upon what its several members do, do with the thought of one another ever present to their minds. Look not every man on his own things, even in matters of action and conduct (what will help me most; what fits into my life best), but every man also on the things of others. We, being many, are one body, one society. In the emphatic words of the text—none of us liveth to himself.

It was St. Paul's special task as a Hebrew of the Hebrews, with the Old Testament truths permeating his every thought, to show how the new Gospel truths and Gospel principles were of a piece with the principles of the old teaching, and—so far as

conduct went—were based upon Sinai's splendid rock-hewn rule of right and wrong, upon a man's duty to God and his duty to his neighbour.

Now see, brothers and sisters, how exactly that bears upon the 'Sunday question' as we know it now.

Is there anybody, I wonder, in all this congregation to-day, however old or however young, who has not found—openly or secretly—a good deal of difficulty, or perhaps a good deal of sadness, or perhaps a good many conscience-pricks, about the right observance of Sunday? The older among us probably remember varying phases of the difficulty at different stages in our life. To one will stand foremost perhaps in memory the childhood phase, when he or she found the restrictions on the routine of Sunday, and especially of that dreariest thing, a wet Sunday, much more exasperating or depressing than he liked to confess. To another, the lawlessness in bigger boyhood or girlhood days of surreptitious Sunday amusement, with perhaps a good deal of self-reproach either then or afterwards. To another, the memory of frank rebellion perhaps, as a grown-up man or woman, against the family tradition of how the day should be kept, and the justifying of it to one's *half*-satisfied conscience, upon new-found principles of what we deemed a righteous liberty. Or, again, the frank recognition by some of us as years run on that the question in

its practical bearings—in face of the plain facts of contemporary English life—is one of the gravest and most difficult with which we have to do. Speaking for myself, I can say quite unreservedly—as one to whom people constantly and most legitimately turn for counsel on the matter—that it is one of the most perplexing upon which to give advice, especially if what one is asked for is a detailed rule of actual conduct, whether for adults or for boys and girls. Such rules, clear and hard cut, are, I honestly think, a mistake, except—and it is a large exception—as deliberate thought-out plans for our personal guidance and self-discipline; and these, if they are to be of much service, must be of our own making, and not imposed upon us from outside, and they must, of course, have relation to our common life, and not only to our personal tastes and idiosyncrasies and needs.

But—someone who hears me may be thinking—but have we not rules laid down in the Bible for the right mode of observing the Lord's Day? Well, personally I do not think that any such detailed rules, binding upon us as Christians, are, as a matter of fact, given us in the Bible. But something *is* given us, far grander and more sacred than a rule—a living principle Divinely laid down, with solemnity, with emphasis, with iteration. A principle which we can trace in the teaching of these books from Genesis to Revelation—a principle the application

of which, for the good of all, throws a personal responsibility on every one of us, on every baptized member of the Church of Christ.

There are two ways in which a teacher, human or Divine, may pass on his message: he may scatter crumbs, or he may sow seed. He may scatter crumbs (many teachers have most usefully done so), fragments of fully fashioned rule, to be taken up and used just as they are. Or he may sow seed—seed which, according to the soil and the tending, will sprout and grow and live and bear fruit an hundredfold. The first of these, the picking up of crumbs, however profitable, is a more or less mechanical task. The second, the culture and ingathering and utilizing of the seed's produce, calls for thought and wisdom, and taxes the full responsibility of him who tends or reaps or grinds or, in the end, applies it to the purpose for which the seed was sown. Not otherwise is it with the fruit of Christ's sowing. The outcome of that is ours to-day for use. We have to apply it to our common needs, using to that end every power which we possess, the Lord of the harvest's own gifts of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and strength. See it—see it pre-eminently in this matter of the Lord's Day. Far back in the dawn of Israel's history the people were Divinely taught that, if the life was to be maintained at its best, there must be some part of it kept free from the dust and the toil

of ordinary days; and Israel grew to a mighty tree, and to a great place among the world's peoples. with Sabbath observance at the very heart of its common life.

'Of course,' as a notable preacher has said—'of course, no outward regulation could insure the thinking about God on the Sabbath, any more than the command not to take His Name in vain could insure reverence for Himself. But, at any rate, the Sabbath gave to those who chose to do so a weekly opportunity to "be still and know" that Jehovah was God, as well as an occasion of physical rest. . . . The Jewish Sabbath passed away when it had served its purpose of preserving the idea of consecration of our time by setting apart some of it for God. . . . Sunday comes down to us with quite a distinct and different mark upon it. It is the day of resurrection. It is no mere revival of the Jewish Sabbath upon a different day. It commemorates a different fact. It is permeated by a different idea. Its characteristic observance is not rest, but worship. The rest came in after. It was the idea of worship on the resurrection day which first laid hold of Christians.'* There are few more curious and interesting matters of research in Christian history than the story of the rise and growth of Sunday—the Lord's Day. There is no stranger distortion surely than that which has somehow made people

* Eyton, 'The Ten Commandments,' p. 57.

think of Sunday with reference rather to its prohibitions than to its positive use. We ought to be dwelling upon what thou *shalt* do, what thou art privileged to do, instead of upon what thou shalt not do, if we are rightly to understand 'the Lord's Day.'

Now, does anybody feel as though what I have said were derogating in any way from the sacredness, or the dignity, or the obligation of Sunday?

My meaning and my own thought is exactly the reverse. It seems to me to be simply impossible to exaggerate the responsibility resting upon every man and woman, who has been baptized into the living Church of Christ, for the right use of the Lord's Day, for safeguarding so inestimable a thing from being tampered with, for cherishing and honouring it for everybody's good. The Lord's Day is no mere accidental observance which might be dropped without interfering with the Christian system. It has been inwrought in the life of the Church of Christ from Apostolic days, and the principle which it enshrines goes back and back into the very origins of God's revelation and God's word.

In the hurry and unrest of modern life in England there has seemed of late to be a peril that our great heritage of 'the Lord's Day' might be marred or hindered. All sorts of new questionings about it, and of new theories about its 'recreative use' and so on, have gained a hold on people's minds, and

many of those who advocate a change from the ancient ways are in some things wise and thoughtful men and women. Problems raised by the present-day growth of bicycling and golf and lawn-tennis and other wholesome and serviceable amusements clamour for solution, and are exceedingly difficult to solve. The answer is not, so to speak, all on one side, and we sorely need the guidance and help of God the Holy Spirit.

Some people would like me, perhaps, to try and solve these problems in black and white to-day. My whole object, on the contrary, is to show that you can only solve them in your life by falling back upon a big, deep, sacred principle, and asking that God Himself, sanctifying and enlarging every power that you possess, will show us the way that we should walk in, for we lift up our souls unto Him. And so this year, in every branch of the Christian Church in the United Kingdom, we have set ourselves to ward off such peril as exists, and to remind ourselves and one another, by a clear and concentrated endeavour, of the treasure which has come down to us out of the misty but hallowed past, and of the service its observance has rendered, and is rendering, to our common life in England. God speed this resolute attempt for England's sake.

And now, do these thoughts, however inadequately I have put them into words, not float us right above the petty questionings and worries which are rife?

Must we still go on asking for an explicit cut-and-dry rule in answer to the question: What may I do, what must I abstain from, on Sunday?

My brother, my sister, you and I are privileged to inherit as part and parcel of our Church's life, and of the life of our Christian nation, the Lord's Day. In our land it is—save where cruel wrong or unthinking selfishness has hindered it—everybody's possession. And our Lord trusts us, trusts us to use it reverently, as a possession majestical in its history and absolutely practical in its possibilities—trusts us to use it unselfishly, as something which belongs equally to us all, as Christians, and which must be so handled by us as to keep it safe for those who are equally its possessors, but who are more helpless than we are to keep their treasure safe.

'None of us liveth to himself.' If anybody's theory or argument is, 'I can do this or that, be it amusement or work, I can do it without harm—indeed, I think it does me good,' we have, even if we are right (a large if), only said half what needs saying. We must be able to go on to say, 'I am certain it is best for everybody that I should use the Lord's Day as I do. Nobody is in danger of losing the right use of his Sunday because of what I do, or join in doing. Nobody, if I can help it, shall be led by my example to misuse or waste his Sundays. I am on my guard against what may make us drift,

even unintentionally or unconsciously, into what will spoil our Sundays.'

Can we all say that? Nay, we must go farther still. We must be able to add with reverence and Godly fear—I am a baptized soldier and servant of Christ. He has enlisted me in His society on earth. Among the sacred usages of His society stands the Lord's Day, with which every week begins. I have asked Him—I do ask Him—to show me how best to use it, for the health and well-being, not of myself only, but of the people of this land. I believe He hears my prayer, and I am using to the very best of my power the spirit of wisdom and understanding which He has planted in me. The manner in which I use the Lord's Day is my deliberate manner of trying to fulfil His will. I am trying week by week to be guided by Him, and I therefore ask His blessing with quietness and confidence upon the way I am using the Sundays and making it possible for others to use them?

If you can genuinely say that—God speed and prosper you; such guidance from Him as to the right and reverent use of common sense is far better than any set of precise rules, because you have thought it out, and prayed about it, and are offering your use of it for His blessing.

But—but if you cannot honestly say that; if you are letting carelessness, or selfishness, or the indulgence of mere pleasure whims, or sheer laziness, or

the greed of gain, or any other such force govern your use of the Lord's day; if you have forgotten your answerableness for other people's Sundays as well as for your own—then pause. Take this specially proffered opportunity of thinking it out, praying it out, afresh, and God be with you in so doing!

If you have any doubts and qualms on the subject, will you this very day, when some quiet half-hour can be secured, go down upon your knees, alone in the presence of God, and quietly, simply, silently ask Him to lead you right, to guide your plans, to set you, if need be, straight. There is no manner of doubt that, in answer to such prayer, He will.

There are two thoughts which must be ours: It is the Lord's Day. 'None of us liveth to himself.'

XXII. JUBILEE OF LICHFIELD THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE*

Fear not, little flock: for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. St. Luke xii. 32.

They are words of good cheer, spoken to men who would sorely need them, and would in recollection greatly prize them, as the years of their life ran on.

And the words have rung out, with a bright and stimulating power, to the 'little flock' in recurrent days of trial, or depression, or bewilderment, or apparent failure, in all the centuries since then.

The thought which underlies them has been absent, harmfully absent perhaps, in the times of what looked like high successes, or the times of triumphant far-flung rule. They do not fit themselves very suitably to a Hildebrand or an Innocent III., nor perhaps to a Thomas Aquinas, or even to a William Laud.

But they lived and glowed, we may be well assured, for the Church of the Catacombs, or for the Diocletian

* Lichfield Cathedral, July 31, 1907.

Martyrs, supplying, indeed, the keynote for what would else have seemed to be the strangely inappropriate strain of quiet and thankful triumph with which those simple men and women went about their work and their prayers, or passed with unhasting yet untroubled readiness to face the tyrants' tortures, or to stain the amphitheatre with their blood. Or again the words came home, for the men themselves have told us so, to the English reformers of another age—the leaders, devout, courageous, learned, capable, who had set their hands, come what might, to the task of bringing back, by the help of God, into the Christian life of England the purity of doctrine and of worship which were needed for the Church's worthier life—and who found themselves, like St. Paul, troubled upon every side; 'without were fightings and within were fears.'

Indeed, there is no time, I imagine, in the Church's life in which there were not little groups of brave and faithful folk, fighting loyally for Christ's cause, in their own land or in the Mission Field, to whom, amid their strivings and their often failures, the Master's promise has been both a pledge and a reality. 'Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom'—to set forward, that is, His reign upon earth, and to let you—you, in all your weakness—be His fellow-workers in the campaign and in the victory.

My brothers, if ever that was true, it is true, I verily believe, in England to-day. Our fathers, in the generations long ago, had battles to fight which are unknown or unneeded now. But ours, which were quite unknown to them, are every whit as urgent, as difficult, and as real. It taxes the wisdom and the courage of the strongest champion of the Faith to face the problem how to make Christ's cause win and Christ's kingdom grow, in the complex tangle of English democratic life, which, itself so ennobling and wholesome an ideal, professes to be Christian, but shrinks in a score of different ways from saying so outright. So be it. The task is hard. The forces of apathy and indifference and selfishness are of almost immeasurable strength. The whirl and stir and rapidity and stress of present-day life in England, commercial, political, social, are distracting and bewildering in a degree to which European experience has known no parallel. And if the Church of Christ, as a genuine progressive living force, is to go forward and to permeate the whole for good—why, then those to whom, as officers, that task is specially assigned, that trust committed, must be up and doing. They must be vigorous and sustained in purpose, robust and capable in thought and word; men in a true sense fitted for so great a call. And at the centre, necessarily, of the definitely Christian forces in the field here in England at such a time must stand the National Church and its

officers. We have, God helping us, to bring it about that men and women shall, everywhere in England, feel, with an inspiring certainty, that the Gospel of Christ can make a practical difference to the daily life of an English citizen, and enable him better to discharge every duty which does or can belong to him as such. It is ours to contradict, with all possible emphasis, what was said a hundred years ago by so keen an observer, and usually so accurate a thinker, as Adam Smith, the author of 'The Wealth of Nations.' In one of his most vigorous chapters* Adam Smith says: 'Religious instruction is a species of instruction of which the object is not so much to render the people good citizens in this world as to prepare them for another and better world in the life to come.' Our task now is utterly and remorselessly to eradicate that notion—to 'shrivel the falsehood from the souls of men,' and to supplant it by a truer and worthier conception of the Gospel of Christ.

That is, as it seems to me, one of the special duties belonging to the Church of England at the present juncture in our national life. But if that is to be done, and Christ's kingdom thus made to grow, our officers, the men of our ministry, must be vigorous and competent. The Bishops must, in the words of our Embertide prayer, be able 'faithfully and wisely to make choice of fit persons,' and the whole Christian people must back them up in doing so.

* Book v., chap. i., article 3.

Well, it is for that that we are gathered here this morning. Our purpose, if I understand it aright, is to strengthen, upon sound, wise lines, a great effort here in the Midlands to meet those needs in the best way. We want everybody who cares—I will not say about 'the well-being of the National Church,' for that may sound a limited thing—but about the religious well-being of the country, to rally to our side, to take an interest in our endeavour, and to help us in every way that he can. We want English parents who think about these matters to do what in them lies. We want the best English homes to send some of the best of their young men. And to the men who thus come to us, with the right spirit in their hearts and the right enthusiasm in their purpose, we promise—what? The noblest opportunity of service—I say it quite deliberately—the noblest opportunity of service which has ever in the world's story lain open to the use of capable, warm-hearted Christian men. I honestly think that that is no exaggeration. Here in Lichfield you have been dealing with the matter for just fifty years. And in those fifty years we have learned by degrees, both here and elsewhere, a great deal which we did not know at first about how to do it aright. There are few fields of effort in which experience has been more fruitful for the correction of mistakes and for the formation of large, generous, wide-minded, effective plans.

You have been served here, in these five decades, by some notable men. It is difficult, I think, to exaggerate the debt which the Church of England owes to George Herbert Curteis, whose principalship covered nearly half your life,* for the force and cogency with which, in his memorable book,† he drew out and explained, for every thoughtful man who reads his words, the lesson of the mutual influence and interaction of the National Church and the Nonconformist bodies who successively left her pale. I should find it difficult myself to name many other books of modern Church history which have conferred so deep and enduring a benefit both upon the Church of England and upon the Nonconforming communities from whom he has taught us to learn so much. And when so penetrating a student and so thoughtful a teacher was working in loyalty and love under the daily counsel of that foremost captain of the saintly band, that man among men, George Augustus Selwyn, it is not wonderful that the joint influence should have produced the result it did, and that the College should have sent forth into the work-field of the Church's ministry at home and abroad soldiers of Christ who have rendered, and, thank God, are still rendering, so strenuous a meed of service to the common good.

* 1857 to 1880.

† 'Dissent in its Relation to the Church of England.' The Bampton Lectures of 1871.

And while your fifty years of college life have run their course, the changes in the conditions, or (to use the modern word) the environment, of our ministry have been neither few nor small. Voices are raised, pretty loudly, in the Church to-day calling attention to the difficulties, ecclesiastical and civil, legislative and synodical, liturgical and rubrical, financial, educational, social, and so forth, by which the clergy of our Church in these opening years of a new century are hampered in their task. I admit them all, and, admitting them, I repeat that still the opportunity which is now at this very time offered to us—to be used or missed—is wider in its range, larger in its possibilities, and more accessible to every eager and capable man than any that has fallen to the lot of any former generation of the English clergy. But to grasp it adequately and to use it aright needs a devotion, a wisdom, a training, and a strength, which have certainly never before in English history been so imperatively required. For that very reason it is the hour when the whole Church should support us in our endeavour to make the training of our clergy as thorough, as thoughtful, as liberal, and as wise, as the wit of man, inspired and guided by the grace of God, can make it. I hope, and I am sometimes inclined even to believe, that the people at large, the Churchmen and Churchwomen of England, see that better than they did, and that they are going to back us up in raising the

standard of requirement, in expecting to secure, and ultimately in securing in far larger numbers, the sort of man whom we most peremptorily need. I wish the averege layman who criticizes with perfect truth and justice the inadequacy and feebleness of so many of us clergy would place himself in thought in the position of a man recently ordained, would picture himself called upon, week by week, to teach and guide, would imagine himself counted upon day by day to minister to sick and whole; and, in every question of joint action, educational or social, or moral or religious, expected to be ready with competent advice, and even leadership in a parish or neighbourhood. The layman readily sees, and perhaps indignantly points out, how stupidly, or dully, or narrow-mindedly, or ignorantly, the clergy on whom he comments are apt to behave. Is he, then, eagerly doing, has he always done, everything in his power to insure first that the ablest and strongest and manliest men who are willing to do so shall come forward to be ordained, and next to see that by his help there is secured for them a really adequate training, both in knowledge and in judgement, whether in things sacred or secular? To-day, in a great cathedral centre, we call attention to that need, and summon to our help all those who care about such things at all. We want the 'new departure' in this college and its life to be a subject of common interest and general aid. If our

hopes be fulfilled, men will come here, after a large training elsewhere in literature and arts, to be specially helped and guided in their preparation for duties as far-reaching in their range as they are unique in their character. Unless they have in their hearts the love of God, revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord, and an eager desire to minister His Word and Sacraments to those for whom Christ died, the training we can offer would be all in vain. But let them come, their hearts aglow with love, their vision open to the world around them, their ears alert to the Divine voice; and then let them go forth armed and aided by what we offer in the college and its life, and their opportunities of service will be ampler and nobler and more varied in these stirring times of ours than they ever were in English life before.

We look round about us, and our difficulties loom large. Large they are, but, I ask you, would you change this time in England for any other that ever was? Would you rather be living and working then than now? I trow not. To go forth with a message in a democratic age, when every man who has something to say will have a fair hearing; to go forth in an age when education is in the air, and ten times as many people can understand us as those who would have understood us a century ago; to be working in what is, after all, a Christian land, however vague and inchoate the meaning of the word;

a land in which people expect—and most helpfully expect—in the Christian ministry a high standard of diligence and personal life—all this means much.

My brothers, on whom that trust is already laid, or to whom it is coming soon, you have, I am persuaded, an open path if you have grace and wisdom to tread it aright. People generally throughout the land understand much better than they did in our grandfathers' days what it means, or ought to mean, to be a minister of the Word and Sacraments of God, and they are coming to appreciate more worthily the need of thorough and sustained training for so great an enterprise, if the pure Word of God is to be preached and the Sacraments duly ministered. Half the difficulties in the modern life of the Church of England have come from men who have entered upon her ministry inadequately prepared for its demands and its duties. The officers of no other Church in Christendom are called to a ministry at once so ordered and so free. It is a ministry whose vows and promises are publicly made, and whose rules lie open for every man to see. And yet a ministry so free that within the wide range of those rules there is place and opportunity for a larger liberty of personal opinion, of ritual usage, and of pastoral modes than is paralleled in any other land. And, once more, our ministry is not ecclesiastical only. It has a definitely assigned place in the national life. The oath of allegiance to the King, taken by us, and by

us alone among ordained men, is a recurrent reminder of our responsibilities to realm as well as Church, of our official citizenship and what it means. Rise, O my brothers, to the charge which thus becomes yours, or perhaps has been yours for many a busy year. The occasion in England's story is great and living. It is a day when men are ready, far readier than of old, to listen and to think; a day when travel is easy and when wisely spoken words go far, and when our social life with all its many-sidedness does try—at least I think so—to be brave and kindly, to be pure and strong. For all that, quit you like men. Contribute, if God grant you so to do—contribute to the solving of our problems and the healing of our wrongs a robust, a large-minded, and a generous love. And then and thus, in loyalty to our living Lord, go forward. 'Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.'

'To give you the kingdom.' 'Thy kingdom come.' Or, to put it in another way, 'Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?'* Do you remember how these words flash out upon us with a permanent message from among the barbaric heathen trappings of the tyrant's Court in the Book of Esther? Thou art come to the kingdom, who knoweth, for such a time as this—to seize its unique and novel opportunities, to wrestle

* Esther iv. 14.

with its splendid problems, to fight and conquer some of its already tottering wrongs.

But to do these deeds, you, and those who go with you, and come after you, must be fit men. And it is to help to make men fit for that inspiring, stimulating trust that we call upon the Church to-day to help us to prepare our armoury, and thus to do what in us lies to make the warrior's panoply complete.

Recall the scene in the 'Pilgrim's Progress' wherein, before Christian leaves the Palace Beautiful:

'The next day they took him, and had him into the Armoury, where they showed him all manner of furniture, which their Lord had provided for Pilgrims; as, Sword, Shield, Helmet, Breastplate, All-prayer, and Shoes that would not wear out. And there was here enough of this to harness out as many men for the service of their Lord, as there be stars in the Heaven for multitude. . . . They showed him, besides, many excellent things, with which Christian was much delighted.'

We go forth and go forward, conscious—humbly, prayerfully conscious—of our weakness, our faint-heartedness, our hesitancy, our natural unfitness for such a service. Yes, but conscious too of another voice, the voice of the Divine Captain who rides forth in the very midst of us—rides forth against His foes and ours, conquering and to conquer.

'Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.'

XXIII. ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY*

If I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the Kingdom of God is come upon you. St. Luke xi. 20.

I am not going to detain you to-night by a discussion of the passage, brimful of interest and of difficulty, to which these words of our Blessed Lord belong. He is answering those who had said, 'He casteth out devils through Beelzebub, the chief of the devils.' For reply He sends them back to the consideration of first principles—'Are we, or are we not,' He virtually asks, 'banded together upon God's side to fight God's battles against the powers of wrong? If we are, then see to it that you support one another in that holy war. It is waged against a strong man armed. But God is stronger than he. Let the soldiers, then, under that command, stand together, and the cause of God will undoubtedly prevail. But be sure that you take in, that you

* St. Bride's Church, Fleet Street, April 29, 1907.

realize, that you weigh, what your responsibility is as sharers in the campaign, as citizens in the Kingdom. "If I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the Kingdom of God is come upon you."'

If, that is to say, these works are not tricks of some mighty power of evil, but are in very deed the works of the Holy God, the God of Righteousness and Truth—if that be so, then do not doubt that you are, in your daily life, your daily use of opportunities, standing before Him, and as citizens of His Kingdom are answerable to Him for the right use of that citizenship and for setting forward His cause among men. The words were spoken, remember, not to Christ's own chosen disciples, but to a far wider circle—to those whom we should nowadays call religiously-minded people generally. They are all of them, He implies, responsible to the King for the setting forward of the Kingdom's life. He invites all to join with Him in the great conflict. Not to engage *with* Him in the work is to take part upon the other side—to join with the evil spirit who is seeking to scatter and divide. Those who are not with Him in asserting the difference between the true God and all false gods—the Uniting Spirit and the dividing spirit—are against Him. And then He goes on to describe in awful and solemn words the state of a man, or a nation, or an age, which has rid itself of one unclean spirit—the spirit, say, of idolatry, or of impure and degrading beliefs—but

which has not sought or found for itself any nobler, purer, Diviner spirit to replace what it has parted with—which, therefore, finds itself denuded of all the pictures and decorations that had filled its chambers of imagery and imagination and reverence and fear—which looks wistfully, restlessly around for something to people the vacant niches, to adorn the house that is swept and empty. And then there come in spirits more evil than before, and the last state of that man, that people, is worse than the first.*

Brothers, can those words of our Lord—spoken originally in a quite different connection—fail to suggest the very picture with which we are familiar now in great portions of the heathen world; nay, in great parts of our British Empire? The evil spirit of degrading and coarse religion and superstition cast out, cast out perforce and perishing by the mere conditions of modern life—but the place left swept and empty for the entrance of a godless, careless, creedless materialism, till the last state of that man, that people, is worse than the first.

For the world in all its parts—for all nations and kindreds and peoples and tongues, whatever their homeland or their hue—there came, when our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem, and walked the hills of Judæa and Galilee, and died

* See F. D. Maurice, 'The Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven,' p. 179.

upon the Cross and rose again, a new revelation or unveiling of what is meant by the Kingdom of God upon earth. The Master bid them mark as an evidence of that coming of the Kingdom the object-lesson of His casting out devils with the finger of God: 'If I with the finger of God cast out devils.' We may pause for a few moments over the phrase. The casting out of devils may be taken in a large and general sense as meaning, in the New Testament, the victory of Christ over the powers of wrong. Apart from its specific or technical meaning—which may well cover more than we are apt to realize—it is used repeatedly to signify or include this wider, more varied kind of fight and conquest wherein the Lord left to His disciples and to us an example that we should follow His steps. His disciples did so follow Him, and not in vain, and (at all events, in the deeper, larger sense of the words) we can do so still. It is as subjects and thralls of an alien spiritual might that our Lord almost always speaks of those sufferers. And against that alien spiritual might, whatever form it takes, He has set us, as He set His first followers, to strive. It is the very essence—the elemental principle—of our missionary work.

Look still more closely at the words, 'If I *with the finger of God* cast out devils.' To a Jewish hearer—his mind steeped in Scriptural phraseology to an extent which, when reading the New Testament,

we sometimes forget—the words could hardly fail to recall their familiar Old Testament use: the two tables of stone, written — how? '*With the finger of God.*' Is the use here, by our Lord, of that rather startling phrase accidental or unimportant? I hardly think so. He is speaking of the victory of God over the devil, of good over evil, of right over wrong, and He uses the very words which speak, in an expressive figure, of God's own enunciation of the big, downright, moral law—'Thou shalt,' 'Thou shalt not'—under the solemn, clear personal sanction or imprimatur of Jehovah Himself. *That* was to prevail over wrong. That was to overthrow the devil, to cast him out.

Archbishop Trench, in speaking of demoniacal possession, has told us how we must attend to 'the Scriptural doctrine concerning the kingdom of evil and its personal head, and the relation in which he (the devil) stands to the moral evil of our world. . . . The Scripture teaches that the opposition of this evil to the will of God is most real, is that of a will which does truly set itself against His will . . . that the whole end of God's government of the world is the subduing of this evil—that is, not abolishing it by main force, which were no true victory, but overcoming it by righteousness and truth.'* *There* comes in surely the sacred law graven '*with the finger of God.*'

* R. C. Trench, 'Notes on the Miracles,' p. 165.

Reverence, obedience, honesty, purity, truth—'five smooth stones,' as an old writer calls them, from the brook, the river, of God: before these the giant Wrong or Devilry shall fall, be its panoply of greaves and shield and helmet what it may.

> 'So with one promise from the sacred pages
> The streams whereof make glad the Church below,
> One text worn smooth by use of rolling ages,
> Our soul's strong enemy we overthrow.'*

'If I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the Kingdom of God' (with its power for us its citizens in the strength of Him our King to conquer wrong), no doubt it 'is come upon you.' Yes, and you have to answer for your using or neglecting of that victorious power.

My friends, do the words, does the plaint which we have sometimes heard, float in upon our minds afresh in that connection—the thought which has found eloquent expression even from non-Christians? How India—our own India—the land of ancient faiths, of deep-rooted religion, has been, and still is, 'waiting for the Ten Commandments,' for something which shall link men's faith with the 'right and wrong' of daily life—for the 'tables written with the finger of God.'

'If I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the Kingdom of God is come upon you.'

* See Cheyne, 'Aids to Devout Study of Criticism,' p. 123.

Paraphrase that once more into other words. Jesus Christ says that if what He is doing before their eyes can be shown, as He has shown it, to be indeed the handiwork of God, it means that their King is among them of a truth. Is not that exactly what people generally must even now be made to see and realize more effectively, more hopefully, more buoyantly, and with a truer sense that His Kingship carries with it the victory of His cause, than has been usually appreciated or understood?

The 'Kingdom of God,' or 'of Heaven,' is a wide phrase, and all of us have probably found how difficult it is to limit, or very precisely to define, its exact meaning in the New Testament. To approach any clearness of thought respecting it we must go back to the Old Testament. Let me quite shortly, and in merest outline, remind you of its growth there. We gain from it a solid, consistent basis for our Christain Missions. From the initial idea of the Almighty Maker of heaven and earth, the Creator, Lord, and Ruler of all things, we pass straight to the picture of man in revolt from God—of a world which has gone astray from Him, but in which there is a faithful remnant—His Kingdom of Grace and Salvation. In the continuous story of the people of God, which takes shape ere long in the narrative of a national life, lies, from a Biblical point of view, 'the key to all historical developments, the explanation of all arrangements

and movements of Divine providence.'* The mighty empires of the world appear in the pages of Scripture only as they affect the chosen race upon whom the interest is centred from its start.

As Keble says of Balaam's Vision:

> 'In outline dim and vast
> Their fearful shadows cast
> The giant forms of Empire on their way
> To ruin: one by one
> They tower and they are gone.'†

To quote a striking passage from a great teacher of sixty years ago:

'Those mountains of Israel, that little corner of the world, so often despised, so often wholly passed over, was yet the citadel of the world's hope, the hearth on which the sparks that were yet to kindle the earth were kept alive. There the great reaction which was one day to find place against the world's sin was preparing; and just as, were we tracing the course of a stream, not the huge morasses, not the vast stagnant pools on either side, would delay us; we should not, because of their extent, count *them* the river; but *that* we should recognize as the stream (though it were the slenderest thread) in which an onward movement and current might be discerned; so it is here. Egypt and Assyria and

* See the article by Professor Orr on 'The Kingdom of God' in Hastings' 'Dictionary of the Bible.'

† 'Christian Year': Second Sunday after Easter.

Babylon were but the vast stagnant morasses on either side; the man in whose seed the whole earth should be blest, he and his family were the little stream in which the life and onward motion of the world were to be traced.

'For indeed, properly speaking, where there are no workings, conscious or unconscious, to the great end of the manifestation of the Son of God in the flesh (conscious as in Israel, unconscious as in Greece), where neither *those* nor *these* are found, there history does not, and cannot, exist. For history, if it be not the merest toy, the idlest plaything, of our vacant hours, is the record of the onward march of humanity towards an end. Where there is no belief in such an end, and therefore no advance towards it, no stirrings of a Divine Word in a people's bosom, where not as yet the beast's heart has been taken away and a man's heart given, there history cannot be said to be. They belong not, therefore, to history, least of all to sacred history, those Babels, those cities of confusion, those huge pens into which by force and fraud the early hunters of men, the Nimrods and Sesostrises, drave and compelled their fellows: and Scripture is only most true to its idea, while it passes them almost or wholly in silence by, while it lingers rather on the plains of Mamre with the man that "believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness" than by "populous No," or great Babylon, where no faith existed but in the

blind powers of Nature and the brute forces of the natural man.'*

We can trace the development of this Old Testament idea of 'the Kingdom of God' right on—though in changing forms—through the successive days of patriarchs and lawgivers, of monarchy and prophets. And all the while there lies at its root, traceable back to its very source (often obscured and forgotten; often misunderstood, but always there), the further thought that the promise of inheritance in the Kingdom, of blessing from its King, was really to be 'for all people.' To use the terribly long words of a careful theologian, there was 'the underlying subconsciousness of a universalistic destiny.' And at last, under the guidance of the later prophets and psalmists, men began to realize the future glorious triumphs of the Kingdom of God throughout the world. The insight came to them through the discipline of their own failures and disappointments. They found out the conditions under which alone the vaster 'Kingdom of God' should come. The more evident it became that the theocracy, the 'close theocracy,' as they knew it, would not endure, the stronger became the conviction that God's Kingdom was not going to perish or pass away, but that it would stand upon a grander and more spiritual basis, and would promulge to all the nations of the world the true worship of the Living

* R. C. Trench, Hulsean Lectures for 1845, pp. 32-34.

God and the pouring out of His Spirit upon all flesh.

Such was the thought already astir in the mind of some of the best and most devout of the Israelites to whom Christ came. And in the words of our text He bids them observe that in Him, and through Him, their hopes were now to come true—'No doubt the Kingdom of God is come upon you.' It is to be world-wide in its possible range and in its claim upon man: 'I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me.' It is to be penetrating in its direct touch upon man's inmost life: 'The Kingdom of God is within you.' It is at length to be absolutely dominant and victorious over the powers of wrong: 'Thy Kingdom come;' and then, because it has fully come: 'Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.' And that is what He, by His life, by His death upon the Cross, has come to do. Is it an exaggeration to say that we have there both the charter and the promise of our missionary work in all its parts?

Now, do we always, I wonder, realize and remember adequately the greatness, the confidence, the bright assurance, the 'victoriousness' (if I may coin the word) of that Kingdom and its King?

Is our message always presented at home and abroad as if we knew for certain what we do know of His riding forth conquering and to conquer? Are our battles against superstition, and idolatry, and

cruelty, and ignorance, and misrule, always supported by workers in England (they are certainly so waged by soldiers in the field) as knowing—knowing for certain—that the issue is not doubtful in the end? Or do we sometimes, in our efforts at home among the people of a Christian land, and in our thoughts and prayers about the foreign work among men of ignorant or alien creeds, speak and act, with loyalty indeed, but with a dispiriting lack of buoyancy, or expectancy, or 'sure and certain hope'? Perhaps I am mistaken, but I seem to feel sometimes as if the onward tramp of our men at home, or occasionally even in the mission-field, had a different sort of sound from that of the soldiers of a victor on his march. This is partly due, I am inclined to think, to the use we make—if it be not rather misuse—of some of the noblest and best-loved of the religious literature we possess. I suppose, for example, that the two English religious books which have, in our whole history, had the widest circulation are 'The Pilgrim's Progress' and 'The Christian Year.' It is impossible to exaggerate the debt we owe to each of these for the fruitful nurture of the Christian soul. But in neither of them, I think, is there any real presentment to us of the society of Christ on earth—His advancing army of men and women enlisted to fight and conquer the world's wrong—in the aspect which rightly belongs to a phalanx of those whom He has called to that inspiriting emprise. Such was

not the aim and purpose either of John Bunyan or of John Keble in those particular books. Thousands have been helped to a warmer faith and nerved to perseverance amid difficulty and danger by the extraordinarily vivid picture of the sin-burdened but redeemed man who, by the prevailing grace of God, wins his painful way at last to the joys of the Heavenly City. And in a wholly different atmosphere of religous thought, devout and eager souls innumerable have been helped by the gentle power of John Keble's poetry to grow in loyalty to the Church's Lord and in thoughtful and thankful appreciation of the gift which He vouchsafes to us in the ministry of Word and Sacrament.

But if we have, in our love for either or each of these, or for similar books, been led to forget the other aspect of our Christian service, wherein we are marshalled for a victorious campaign and fired by a high enthusiasm to strike forward against evil and ignorance and apathy in the strength of Him who died for us upon the Cross and rose again victorious, and is victorious still—if we make little of that ennobling trust, or regard as doubtful the issue of the fray —why, then, we have only half learned what He meant when He bid us see by His victory over Satan what it is that we are called to share. If I, your Captain, with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the Kingdom of God is come upon you, and for you too the Victor's path

lies open. Or, again, 'Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom.'

Confidence, so it be not self-confidence, but confidence in Him, is the spirit in which He bids us gird ourselves for the fray, wage the lifelong fight, lay down at length in life's eventide (come when it may) the invigorating trust.

Our missionary work, my friends, does not in these respects stand by itself. It is quite simply, quite definitely, quite naturally, an inherent part of the larger whole, our use for Christ of the busy years with which God entrusts us.

There are scores here to-night who know from personal experience or from close study of the eventful century of our Society's life how largely the fruitfulness of our Church's plans and efforts in different mission-fields has turned upon the spirit with which men entered—in this land or that—upon the holy war. To take a single example out of many that might be named. If thousands of quiet Christian worshippers are now, in 1907, crowding week by week the multiplying churches of Uganda; if that fertile land, with its bloodstained records of benighted cruelty and wrong, is now winning its assured place among Christian States, who shall say how much of it is owing to the indomitable hopefulness, the unquenchable spirits, and the steady, bright expectancy with which men like

Bishop Hannington and Alexander Mackay prepared the way for those who should come after them—prepared the way for fiery trials and martyrdoms which were to be the very seed-plot of a living Church in which, last year alone, some four thousand adults and two thousand infants were baptized? You remember Bishop Hannington's last letter, written just before his own martyrdom twenty-one short years ago:

'Starvation, desertion, treachery, and a few other nightmares and furies hover over one's head in ghostly forms, and yet, in spite of all, I feel in capital spirits and feel sure of results, though perhaps they may not come exactly in the way we expect. In the midst of the storm I can say:

> '"Peace, perfect peace, our future all unknown?
> Jesus we know, and *He is on the Throne.*"'

Recall the accounts of the incantations and sorceries and spells, the tortures and mutilations, which were rife in that dark region then, and apply the words, 'If I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the Kingdom of God is come upon you.'

Such memories send us surely to our knees in penitence for our apathy and lukewarmness, in gratitude for the living power of our victorious Lord, in steady expectation that we shall see greater things than these. But, my brothers, if those 'greater things' are indeed to come to pass, it must be because we are not only eager and enthusiastic, but

are men and women who do genuinely in our hearts believe in the coming triumph of the Lord, in whose Name, in whose strength, with whose abiding presence, our missionaries go forth. The hopes and expectations must be definite and clear. 'It is not for us to know the times and seasons.' The Father hath kept these in His own authority. But surely, surely we must sound out the clear note of men who are persuaded that, whether it comes soon, or long years hence, 'the kingdoms of this world' shall indeed become 'the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.'

That expectation gives us something more than courage and high spirit: it gives us definiteness too. It is as Christians who know in Whom they have believed that we are to wage the war and win.

It was finely said in this place and on this occasion nearly half a century ago, that 'the kingdoms of the world are the objects of the lawful ambition of the Church of Christ. To conquer them for her Lord is her aim, and her success in that conquest is her true glory. But it must be *for* her Lord that she conquers them; . . . it is His Kingdom, and His alone, that she is to establish. That Kingdom is the kingdom of the cross, the Cross of Christ. . . . The Cross with its double mystery of the death that was suffered that we might have life, the risen life that is our death to sin. This Cross, and this alone, may

His Church lift up; in this sign alone is she to conquer.' *

We do not go forth or send men forth merely to bid people lay aside the superstitions and errors with which they have overlaid what is called the 'great, all-sufficing truth of one good God and Father of all.' We go forth, or we send men forth, to proclaim what Christ Himself proclaimed: the living Gospel of how He came to this world to save men from their sins, to cast out devils—yes, and to fill the heart with the definite knowledge of His love, revealed in Bethlehem and on Calvary and by the opened grave. Nothing less, nothing slighter than that will serve. The *victorious* message with which we go forth is the message of the Apostles' Creed, which we said together half an hour ago. In that strength conquer. 'No doubt the Kingdom of God is come upon you.' 'Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.'

Therefore, brothers, therefore with gladness and hope 'tell it out among the heathen that the Lord is King.'

* W. C. Magee, 'The Gospel and the Age,' p. 80.

XXIV. THE CENTENARY OF THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY*

And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good. GENESIS I. 3, 4.

'LET there be light.' It is at once the motto and the condition of all progress that is worthy of the name. From chaos into order, from slumber into wakefulness, from torpor into the glow of life—yes, and 'from strength to strength'—it has been a condition of progress that there should be light. 'God saw the light, that it was good.'

That, surely, is the thought which is ours to-day. We thank God for His revelation in the Bible, and especially to-day, with thousands who in other lands are gathered like ourselves, we are thanking Him for this—that He is making these joint prayers and praises possible and practical and intelligent by means of our having in our hands throughout the

* St. Paul's Cathedral, March 6, 1904.

world, 'every man in his own tongue wherein he was born,' the written record of the story of our Father's love. That is our special thought this morning. Not the infinite marvel of the Gospel message; not the significance of the cradle at Bethlehem, and the uplifted Cross on Calvary, and the opened grave, and the Pentecostal gift; but something more limited than that—the deliberate recollection and the thankful acknowledgment of what we owe to the written record — humanly compiled, but Divinely ordered and guided — the record of that stupendous fact in the world's story, and of the preparation, and the discipline, and the promises, and the prayers, which had gone before. It is just in proportion as the Divinely-ordered record has been known and read of all men—just in proportion as those on whom rested the responsibility of guidance have let it make its way and do its work and bear its message straight to the heart of gentle and simple, of the learned and the ignorant, that its power has become patent, and that its fruitfulness for good—inexplicable otherwise—has proclaimed to every thoughtful observer the Divinity of its origin.

And yet in the chequered story of the Bible's life, since first, as a written Bible for the people's use, it was delivered and expounded to the listening crowds of men and women and children from Ezra's pulpit of wood 'in the broad place that was before the water-gate' at Jerusalem, at sunrise on a September

day 2,350 years ago—since first that happened it has again and again been true to say that men, consciously or unconsciously, have loved darkness rather than light, or at least that the light has shined in the darkness and the darkness apprehended it not. Go back in thought, and picture the scene enacted upon this very spot less than 400 years ago, when on Shrove Sunday, 1527, a great platform was erected in the nave, whereon sat the high potentates of English Church and Realm. Opposite the platform, over the north door of the Cathedral, was a great crucifix, a famous image, in those days called the Rood of Northen, and at the foot of it, inside a rail, a fire was burning with a multitude of condemned books ranged round it in baskets waiting for the flames. What were those books? They were the 'Testaments' in English, the very translation which forms the basis of that which we have read to-day. We are not met here now to pass judgement upon the opinions or the prejudices of other days and other men. They may have been as conscientious as our own. But at least we can thank God for the ampler light. The baskets were cast upon the flames, not because those who burned the books wished to withhold from any man the Word of God, but because they honestly believed the form of these vernacular translations to be erroneous, or their circulation to be misleading and therefore harmful. What stood in the way was darkness and prejudice rather than

any deliberate intention to mar the Divine purpose or to withhold the Divine message. Princes—our Sovereign himself had health allowed—Princes and clergy and people meet to-day within these walls to thank God for the distribution to every nation under heaven of just such Bibles for the use of man and woman and child as those which so good Christians as Bishop Fisher and Sir Thomas More committed with solemn censure to the flames. By degrees the light spread, and 'God saw that it was good.' We are all, I imagine, persuaded in our minds that among the means of extending that light the Bible itself has for centuries taken the foremost place. But, with man's proneness to distort or misuse even the grandest of God's gifts, this very privilege has had a peril of its own. People have forgotten, in the using of it, the manner in which the book, under the guiding hand of God, came to take the form in which we know it now, and have neglected the help thus given to us for understanding how to use without abusing it, how to accept it as both human and Divine. Some here will remember a notable sermon* by one of the greatest preachers of our own or any age, in which he compares the double aspect of Holy Scripture, as the word of God and the work of man, with the two aspects in which His contemporaries looked upon the earthly life of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself: 'The Word became

* W. C. Magee, 'The Gospel and the Age,' p. 311 *et seq.*

flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory.' 'Is not this the carpenter?' You may dwell on the human side; you may dwell on the Divine. Realize one of these alone, and you will fail to apprehend Him aright. And the mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God—the living Word—has its parallel in the mystery of the inspiration of the written Word of God. The Bible is God's Word. 'As truly and as certainly as in Jesus Christ dwelt the fulness of the Godhead bodily, so truly and so certainly in the hearts of those who gave us this Book dwelt the Divine Spirit of God.' God, who speaks to us in the Bible, spoke first in the souls of those whom He stirred to give us these words. They are, therefore, their words as well as His. God was speaking through the lips of real men. 'It was the tender thought, the glowing aspiration, the lofty hope, the trembling fear, the solemn awe, the stern indignation of men moved to the very depths of their nature by the power of God working in them, that shaped the words which live and burn in the pages of Scripture to this very day, and which stir our hearts because they first stirred the hearts of those who uttered them.' It is because men, it is because teachers in the Church of God, have forgotten this that half our perplexities about the Bible have arisen. The Church has sometimes so insisted on the true Divinity of the written word that she has almost forgotten its humanity. And hence men have trembled at

reasonable, intelligent, reverent criticisms which seemed to them profane, 'instead of meeting them by the simple straightforward admission that they are, in many cases at any rate, quite valid, but that they only prove to us what we knew already, that this word is truly human, and that, in spite of them, we hold it to be also truly Divine.'

'Let there be light.' No man, I suppose, will admit—probably no man ever did admit, even to himself—that in these matters it is daylight that he fears. But has it not been true, nevertheless, and true of many of the best and most devout souls, as the Christian centuries have run their course, that—albeit unintentionally or unawares—they were setting themselves, however impotently, to thwart the Divine purpose, 'Let there be light'? What else can we say of the persistency with which—untaught by past experience—the guardians and champions of orthodox belief as based on Holy Scripture have, times without number, on the authority of their own interpretation of the Bible, denounced as presumptuous or even blasphemous error the discoveries and aims of scientific men? It was on the strength of Biblical texts that the scheme of Christopher Columbus was condemned by the Spanish junta in 1490 as vain and indefensible. In 1616 Galileo's teaching that the earth moves round the sun was formally censured by the consulting theologians of the Holy Office, 'because

expressly contrary to Holy Scripture.' A generation or two afterwards English students were warned by high authority against the investigations of so true and profound a Christian thinker as Sir Isaac Newton as being 'built on fallible phenomena and advanced by many arbitrary presumptions against evident testimonies of Scripture.' And the lives of Roger Bacon, of Copernicus, of Kepler, and of many more, down even to our own day, and to incidents fresh in the recollection of many here, suggest to the thoughtful student of Holy Scripture the imperative need of a reverent and humble-minded caution in our attitude towards every controversy of the kind. We have been oftentimes reminded that it is only the foundation of God that remaineth sure, and on that foundation have been built also the irrefragable conclusions of science. We are not, indeed, required to accept at once every unproven hypothesis, or to mistake for absolute science mere assertions about that which is unknowable. Some of the votaries of science have had as little right to speak in its name as theologians have had to speak authoritatively and finally in the name of God. True science and true religion are twin sisters, each studying her own sacred Book of God, and nothing but disaster can arise from the petulant scorn of the one, or from the timidity or the tyrannies of the other. 'Let there be light.' From the Father of lights cometh every good and every perfect gift.

And as with the scientific knowledge which has been so strangely supposed to be contradictory to Scripture rightly used and rightly understood, so too —must we not say it to-day?—so, too, with every reverent and honest investigation into the history and the character of the sacred volume itself. 'Let there be light.' I wonder sometimes whether those who find themselves depressed or distraught because the investigations of modern students, as devout and honest as themselves, have suggested a resetting of some of our traditional opinions about the dates and composition of the ancient Hebrew books of our Bible, and who feel such resetting to be audacious, if not profane, have ever asked themselves, quietly and with real deliberation, upon what authority it is that they base their firm beliefs as to these questions of authorship and date—nay, as to the contents and the limits of the Scriptural Canon itself. Upon what authority, for example, do you draw the line which includes the Book of Ecclesiastes or Esther, and excludes the Book of Wisdom, or which includes the Second Epistle of St. Peter and excludes the Epistles of St. Clement? I am not for a moment disputing the correctness of the line we draw. I believe it to be perfectly right. But who drew it? What is the authority upon which you rightly trust it? To ask ourselves such questions is helpful, I think, as a reminder to us that upon some of the largest and deepest problems of date, or of author-

ship, or of what is called canonicity—in which we perhaps accept a particular theory as a matter of course, and are even shocked if it be challenged—we can hardly claim Divine or infallible authority for the answer which, on the basis of our present knowledge, we rightly and even unhesitatingly give. As regards the Old Testament, we have had access in these latter days, under the overruling Providence of God, to a wholly new range of facts about the dawn of civilization in the ancient nations of the world. Egypt and Assyria now vie with each other in their once undreamed-of contributions to the elucidation of our Sacred Book. And every fresh discovery, every new disinterment of significant tablet, or cylinder, or inscription, from its resting-place of literally thousands of years, seems, to me at least, to do something more towards the strengthening and deepening of our belief in the genuine inspiration of the written Word of God, and in the distinctive glory of its Divinely-ordered message. We can give a new application to the Gospel sentence, 'If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.'

'Let there be light.' If it be true, as one sometimes fears it is, that there is less of the deliberate, prayerful, devotional study of the Word of God in our homes and on our knees than there used to be in England in days gone by, it is certainly true, I

think, to say that there never was a time when so many people as now were bringing the whole power of trained intelligence and of cultured thoughtfulness to bear upon its every part. And that sustained effort cannot but be fruitful, cannot but react in its turn—and react healthfully for us and for our children—upon the other mode of Bible study, that mode which shapes itself in prayer. For this surely is unquestionable—he who sets himself in faith and hope to evoke from the Bible such secrets as it will disclose about the story of its structure and its growth will find himself, so to speak, forced to his knees by the very Divineness of the message of guidance and of revelation which it will impart to his inmost soul. If there be, here and there, a 'removing of those things that are shaken,' it will be in order 'that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.' Bring to the study of God's word every implement which you possess of intelligence and education to aid you in the task, but remember that what, after all, matters most is that you should learn how God meant, through that life of other days, to speak to your own life now. It is in the truest sense a 'revelation,' an unveiling of some One who is now alive and near, and who has, every whit as truly as in Bible times, a message for your daily life.

It is in order to make the learning of that supreme lesson, the realization of that Divine presence, more

possible in the households of every land that the great society for whose centenary we give thanks to-day has applied itself single-heartedly to the one task of placing within the reach of old and young the opportunity of possessing for themselves the written message of the Word of God. Various teachers will in different ways interpret that message, and from widely different standpoints will bring its lessons home. From every corner of the mission-field—from every kindred and people and tongue—comes the grateful recognition of this elemental provision of the material or the weapon on which each Christian teacher must rely. As we trace the story of the Bible Society's successive conflicts for a hundred years with the giant obstacles of poverty and distance and language, we look upwards and outwards and onwards. We thank God and take courage. The object of it all is one—'That they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.'

I end with words spoken from this pulpit, fourteen years ago,* by the most eloquent, perhaps, of its countless occupants: 'As we drift—along the swift, relentless current of time—towards the end of life, as days, and weeks, and months, and years, follow each other in breathless haste, and we reflect now and then for a moment that, at any rate for us, much

* See Canon Liddon's Sermon on the Work of the Old Testament, December 8, 1889.

of this earthly career has passed irrevocably, what are the interests, the thoughts—ay, the books—which really command our attention; what do we read and leave unread; what time do we give to the Bible? No other book, let us be sure of it, can equally avail to prepare us for that which lies before us; for the unknown anxieties and sorrows which are sooner or later the portion of most men and women; for the gradual approach of death; for the passage into the unseen world; for the sights and sounds which then will burst upon us; for the period, be it long or short, of waiting and preparation; for the Throne and the Face of the Eternal Judge. Looking back from that world, how shall we desire to have made the most of our best guide to it!' 'O Lord, Thy Word endureth for ever in heaven; Thy truth also remaineth from one generation to another.'

XXV. PRAYER AND BUSINESS*

Then I rose up and did the King's business.

DANIEL VIII. 27.

IT is an unusual text for a sermon. Perhaps no preacher ever selected it before, and you are doubtless trying at this moment to recall the context and the significance of the words. Let me remind you. They occur in the wonderful story of Daniel: his prayers and their answer, his visions, his aspirations, his hopes and fears for his nation and its faith, and the consolations with which God strengthened him for work.

For work. For the story of Daniel sets before us no picture of a mystic visionary, an ascetic thinker living outside the stream and swing of the world's life. He is set before us as a busy man of affairs, with a huge trust laid upon him for active administrative service; immersed, as we should nowadays express it, in public business. But on the life is set the stamp of faithfulness to God, whatever that

* The Spital Sermon, Christ Church, Newgate Street, April 22, 1903.

faithfulness might cost. The story of the den of lions, familiar to every one of us from earliest childhood, as it was familiar to Jewish boys in temple and synagogue for centuries before Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem, tells us pre-eminently this: that he was a man who was not ashamed to be known as one who said his prayers, and who felt that those prayers really mattered. This man, of quiet, unflinching, prayerful purpose, avowedly took the work which was allotted to him—the public work in a heathen capital—as of Divine appointing, to be done to the very best of his power under the all-seeing eye and the personal guidance of the Lord his God. To him, then—so runs the sacred story—were granted powers of insight and of outlook beyond the powers of other men. The outcome, perhaps the necessary outcome, of his faith and prayer (and his prayerfulness, remember, is constantly referred to) was an unveiling, a 'revelation,' of the will and purpose of God for nations and for men. But the two sides or divisions of his life were inseparably one, and therein, in part, lies the lesson of his story. It is in the very centre of what the Bible tells us about his converse with God—in the midst of what we should nowadays call his 'deepest religious thoughts' and words and visions—that we find the old man immersed in the duties of his secular office. 'I rose up and did the King's business.' The vividness of his communion with God is not one whit restrained or marred by his

secular work, nor must that secular work—those prosaic, responsible duties of his office and calling—be set aside or disregarded even when there has come to him the deepest, the most overwhelming of spiritual visions or messages from on high. The two 'departments,' if we may use the word, were the complement each of the other. The vision might literally overpower him when it came—nay, it did so overpower him utterly—but it would send him back the stronger to his duties. 'I rose up and did the King's business, and I was astonished at the vision.'

You will see, I think, the fitness of this thought to our purpose to-day. For some four centuries and a half at the least it has been thought well that, in addition to the ordinary ministrations of the Church, there should, every spring, here at the central pivot of the world's commercial life, be a special reminder given to us all of what the Lord Himself, the Lord of Christendom, would have us be and do. And the reminder—this 'Spital Sermon,' as it was called—was to come at Eastertide, when we pause for a moment, and the whirr of our machinery—commercial, legislative, civic, judicial—is stayed or lessened, that we may remember the triumphant strength of Him who conquered death, of Him in whose Name we are ourselves enlisted for the battle against the world's wrongs, against cowardice and fraud, against disease and ignorance, and may realize that He, our risen Lord, goes forth at our head 'conquering and to conquer.'

There are no doubt some here who have been accustomed to regard this occasion as inseparably connected with the great school which for three centuries and a half has formed so large a part of the Spital preacher's congregation. 'The constant association of the Blue Coat School with the Spital Sermon from 1553 onwards,' says the foremost modern authority on the subject,* 'has almost established the right of the Hospital to claim the function as its own.' But this, as he has pointed out, would be a simple mistake of fact, and though we miss to-day the inspiriting companionship of the great cohort of those whose working life lies still ahead, we are but carrying on a custom so venerable that it dates back to Plantagenet days, two centuries at least before Christ's Hospital was born. The primary purpose and idea had clearly to do with the citizens of London, and not with the School, although the School from its foundation onwards has, as an inherent part of the City's life, taken its place in church on this great occasion.

Following out, then, what I conceive to have been the purpose of this annual muster of some of London's foremost citizens, I would ask you to dwell with me for a few minutes upon the thought which is illustrated by the text I chose—prayer at the very heart of business; business uplifted and made strong

* See the Rev. E. H. Pearce's 'Annals of Christ's Hospital,' p. 217.

by prayer. I suppose it is true to say that the natural impulse of every single one of us is to keep the two things quite apart; the natural impulse which belongs, as we fancy, to a higher civilization, or to a more liberal and non-superstitious age. For it was not always people's instinct; it is not everywhere people's instinct now.

When at Easter or Rogation-tide the illiterate peasant folk of a village in the Apennines bring their goats and their ploughshares and their vine-poles to receive the blessing of the Church in the name of Christ, honestly believing that upon that their kids or their vintage depend, we may deem them superstitious, and perhaps they are. Superstitious? So perhaps — perhaps — is your little girl when she prays that there may be a fine afternoon for her birthday picnic, or that she may find her strayed kitten. But it is the sort of superstition, if we must needs call it so, which belongs to a simple childlike faith. You can find it in abundance in the Bible story, and we should many of us be better men and women, worthier citizens of earth, truer citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven, where the angel guardians of these little ones 'do always behold the face of our Father which is in heaven,' if we had ourselves a larger measure of the faith of childhood, transmuted, expanded, grown into the reverent, thoughtful, patient trustfulness which belongs to grown-up men in their relation to their living Lord,

in their intelligent and loyal hold upon the message of Christmas and of Easter Day.

> 'And they who do their souls no wrong,
> But keep at eve the faith of morn,
> Shall daily hear the angel-song:
> To you the Prince of Peace is born.' *

The private, personal prayers of a middle-aged business man, rich in the gathered experience of life's intercourse, and face to face with the answerableness and the perplexities which such experience brings, can and must and ought to shape themselves quite differently from what his prayers were like when he used to kneel down every night at his mother's knee, or when, as a little lad, he first went to school. But let him beware—yes, in God's Name, let him beware—lest in these dusty paths of middle life he lose hold of what was so real to him as a little child, and allow his prayer to become a form, perhaps a Sunday form, and nothing more. Voices he will hear at times, though I think they are less loud than they used to be, telling him that it is and must be a vain fancy to dream that his prayers can make any practical difference, except indeed in so far as the act of praying may be soothing, or sobering, or encouraging to his own spirit in its aspirations. It was supposed not many years ago that the verdict of pure science, apart from revelation, was becoming fixed and unambiguous to that effect. With no

* J. R. Lowell, 'A Christmas Carol.'

such assurance do its foremost and most thoughtful votaries speak to-day, and it is difficult to overrate the significance of the change. It will not be denied, for example, that among the foremost physicists in England is Sir Oliver Lodge. Hear how, from a purely scientific standpoint, setting aside all reference to revelation, he stated the problem a few months ago—stated it, not solved it. But the significance lies in the manner and phraseology of the scientific statement.

'The root question or outstanding controversy,' he says, 'between Science and Faith rests upon two distinct conceptions of the universe—the one that of a self-contained and self-sufficient universe with no outlook into or links with anything beyond, uninfluenced by any life or mind except such as is connected with a visible and tangible material body; and the other conception that of a universe lying open to all manner of spiritual influences, permeated through and through with a Divine spirit, guided and watched by living minds, acting through the medium of law indeed, but with intelligence and love behind the law: a universe by no means self-sufficient or self-contained, but with feelers at every pore groping into another supersensuous order of existence, where reign laws hitherto unimagined by Science, but laws as real and as mighty as those by which the material universe is governed.'

'The whole controversy,' he goes on to say, 'hinges in one sense on a practical pivot, the efficacy of prayer. . . . Does prayer pierce through the husk and apparent covering of the sensuous universe, and reach something living, loving, and helpful beyond?'*

To questions so expressed the writer's answer, however veiled, is not doubtful. Indeed, he answers it himself a little later.†

'The lesson,' he says, 'that science has to teach theology is to look for the action of the deity, if at all, then always: not in the past alone or in the future, but equally in the present. . . . We can see him now if we look: if we cannot see, it is only that our eyes are shut.

'"*Closer He is than breathing, nearer than hands or feet.*"

'Poetry—yes—but also science, the real trend and meaning of science, whether of orthodox "science" or not.'

In a curious little book which, from a religious standpoint widely different from any which I, for one, could take, has brought some of these problems before us within the last few weeks, the writer tells us of a vision which rose before him in a convent chapel, where he seemed to see or feel the immeasur-

* See the article on 'Science and Faith' in the *Hibbert Journal*, October, 1902, p. 61.

† *Ibid.*, January, 1903, p. 214.

able potency of the solitary kneeling figure rapt in silent intercessory prayer for the busy or heedless world outside. Nothing could be less 'scientific' in the sterner sense; nothing farther removed from the calm logical statement of the scientist whom I have quoted. But is the outcome very different, after all? He was watching, half scornfully, as he describes it, the kneeling figure, when he became aware in his vision of the subtle, or scarcely subtle, connection which subsisted between the offerer and the Hearer of the prayer.

'You may think of it,' he says, 'as one of those bands you see in machinery connecting two wheels, so that when either wheel moves the other moves too. . . . The union of the two represented itself to me as forming a kind of engine that radiated an immense light or movement. . . . I perceived that this black figure knelt at the centre of reality and force, and . . . there ran out from the peaceful chapel lines of spiritual power that lost themselves in the distance, bewildering in their profusion, and terrible in the intensity of their hidden fire. Souls leaped up and renewed the conflict as this tense will strove for them. . . . Others, acquiescent and swooning in sin, woke and snarled at the merciful stab of this poor nun's prayers. . . . And I, in my stupid arrogance, had thought that my life was more active in God's world than hers.'*

* 'The Light Invisible,' pp. 119-125.

Now, I am not adopting the phraseology which I have quoted, and there is more which I could still less adopt or endorse. But the imagery suggests a solid and vital truth: the very truth which has been enshrined for two thousand years and more in the imperishable story of Daniel, his visions, his insight, and his prayers; and, with them all, his active, stirring, responsible work. 'Then I rose up and did the King's business, and I was astonished at the vision.'

Has that no message for those of us who are immersed from Monday morning to Saturday night in the discharge of high responsibilities which concern the characteristic forces of England's civic and commercial life—responsibilities which, it is not too much to say, take a different hue altogether when you can simply and quietly commit the busy life every day to the God who heareth prayer?

But, before I close, we must turn for a few moments to the other side of the double picture. The work can be uplifted and hallowed by prayer, but it is not less true that the prayer will have its truest and most natural outcome in persistent, painstaking, trustworthy work. The vision had come and gone: God's voice had been heard: 'Then I rose up and did the King's business.' The worthy doing of the work, be it as prosaic, or, to use our common phrase, as 'secular' as you will, is just the thing which God now wants of us, provided only that it be inspired and

penetrated throughout by the consciousness that it is the discharge of a trust given to us, not for our glory, but for the common good. The word 'duty' may be coarsened into a low and unworthy meaning. But it need not, and should not, be so coarsened. It is not, I hope, the mere ebullition of insular pride which makes us claim the word as sounding a characteristically English note. You remember, perhaps, the striking comparison which has been drawn by a painstaking student of European history between the despatches or proclamations of Napoleon Buonaparte and the orders or despatches of Arthur, Duke of Wellington.

'Napoleon,' he says, 'was covetous of glory; Wellington was impressed with duty. . . . Singleness of heart was the characteristic of Wellington, a sense of duty was his ruling principle; ambition pervaded Napoleon, a thirst for glory was his invariable incentive. . . . There is not a proclamation of Napoleon to his soldiers in which glory is not mentioned, nor one in which duty is alluded to. There is not an order of Wellington to his troops in which duty is not inculcated, nor one in which glory is mentioned.'*

'I rose up and did the King's business'—the business, that is, for the common good, which is entrusted to my individual charge. Apply the thought to ourselves, and it would mean, surely, not only the

* Alison's 'History of Europe,' vol. xiv., pp. 70-72.

discharge of what are popularly called 'public duties' but (scarcely less pointedly) the right use of the 'trust' of ownership, of leadership, of partnership, of commercial credit, even of personal capacity, or intelligence, or power. When we speak of an influential friend or a public man as 'talented,' how many of us, I wonder, recollect whence it is that we draw the phrase. It is an unconscious quotation from one of the most solemn and searching of our Lord's parables. 'To one *He gave* five talents, to another two, to another one.' It was He who gave them, and for daily use. In a higher sense than that of the text they are for 'the King's business.'

True for individuals, it is equally true for communities which, after all, are made up of individuals. Of no community was it ever more sacredly, more sternly, true than of us Londoners to-day. The trust given to us for the world's gain and good is almost boundless in its range. Some here will remember the striking chapter with which Mr. Ruskin begins what is perhaps his greatest book, 'The Stones of Venice.'

'Since first the dominion of men,' he says, 'was asserted over the ocean, three thrones, of mark beyond all others, have been set upon its sands: the thrones of Tyre, Venice, and England. Of the first of these great powers only the memory remains; of the second, the ruin; the third, which inherits their

greatness, if it forget their example, may be led through prouder eminence to less pitied destruction.'

And he goes on to show how these maritime and commercial cities of the past proved unfaithful to the mighty trust, the unique opportunity, which for the time was theirs, and he proclaims for ourselves the warning which they utter. The insidious, the baneful, and, in the end, the ruinous, forces of self-satisfaction and self-praise, and of a proud contempt for peoples other than our own; the greedy rivalries within our own borders, which lead to the forfeit of confidence because confidence is no longer deserved—these perils, as we read their outcome in days gone by, stand gaunt with warning to ourselves, a warning which we are learning perhaps to take to heart while yet there is time. We are awaking (is it not so?) to the grandeur, yes, and the practicalness, yes, and, in some measure, the 'reachableness,' of our ideals. We do want to be a people 'whose mind is set upon righteousness,' and who are pledged to an unending war against what is mean and cowardly and cruel and impure.

We are met this afternoon on St. George's Eve. To-morrow is St. George's Day. There was a time when the people of England made much of that high festival. It has a splendid symbolism. At one of the stirring epochs of our island story, five centuries and a half ago—the epoch of Crécy and Poictiers, of the Black Prince and his companions—the noblest

Order of our Knighthood was founded with this as its emblem and badge: St. George, in the strength of Christian valour; St. George, not in his own prowess, but with the Cross of Christ upon his argent shield, trampling under foot the writhing dragon of impiety and cruelty and wrong. The Installation Order of a Knight of the Garter tells us to this day—for it is unrepealed—what is the ideal which England on St. George's Day would set before her foremost men. In addition to the promise of hardihood and perseverance, of loyalty and faith, every knight thus formally installed must solemnly declare that he is ready to 'offer himself' for the 'just and necessary defence of them that be oppressed and needy.' Such is the trust; to be discharged in no self-centred strength, but in the power of Him who trusts us. It is laid upon us all. The Knightly Order with its promises is but an object-lesson, a visible, audible specimen of what is entrusted to every one of us severally, and to the community whereof we are part. 'The just and necessary defence of them that be oppressed and needy.' That rings true. The City of London is known, the round world over, for its care for the needy, or the famine-stricken, or the orphaned, or the suffering, or the poor, and the very occasion which has gathered us to-day recalls and reasserts and drives home that sacred duty, that solemn privilege and trust. To dwell upon the duty now would be a needless and

shallow commonplace. We have seen to-day that the doing of our task aright depends upon our remembering whence the inspiration for facing it is drawn. 'I arose and did the King's business, and I was astonished at the vision'—the vision vouchsafed to us in an 'hour of insight,' the vision of Him who inspires the purpose and guides us to its due and wise fulfilment—the vision of Him who Himself has told us, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, ye have done it unto Me.'

XXVI. A NEW YEAR'S DAY SERMON, 1911*

The Lord is King, the earth may be glad thereof: yea, the multitude of the isles may be glad thereof. Clouds and darkness are round about Him; righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His seat. PSALM XCVII. 1, 2.

In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. ST. JOHN I. 4.

A TEXT from the Old Testament and a text from the New. They were written a good many centuries apart, and they show us—it is one of the thoughts which should help us just now—how, in the unfolding of His purpose for the world, God led His people on 'from strength to strength,' teaching them first to understand His governance, and then His Fatherhood, and then His tender love, and then the helpful guidance and personal touch which belonged to the Advent of the Son of God, and His life and death as Man for men.

* Canterbury Cathedral, January 1, 1911.

'The Lord is King, the earth may be glad thereof: yea, the multitude of the isles may be glad thereof.' That is the basal principle of our faith. It found expression in this Psalm when the people came back from a toilsome discipline of captivity, to start afresh in their own land, with hopefulness and loyalty and joy, new things in their national life, giving it a character which, in all the vicissitudes of its later history, it has never lost. God's rule and governance for their nation were to make the nation itself a power in the world outside. It was to be theirs to bear witness to the truth of 'God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.' And so the whole earth was to be glad thereof, even the far-off isles in the Western Sea. On that thought of truth and righteous rule, gleaming out through the clouds and darkness and mystery of the Divine sovereignty, on that thought for centuries the pious Israelite rested and relied; yes, on and on, through the years of trial and invasion and outside tyranny.

It was to men who had been reared in that belief that the Gospel message came when Jesus Christ was born. It was men in whom that faith was ingrained and instinctive whom He chose as His Apostles, and in them at least the ground was ready for the new and infinitely grander revelation of 'the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.' They learned it from Himself, and the old Israelite, St. John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, looking back

along the years of his eventful life and service, can sum it up in the opening verses of his Gospel. The 'clouds and darkness' were not all rolled away. There must be mystery still, but 'through the darkness comes a human voice,' through the clouds a light breaks and shines and guides. 'In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.' Brothers, there are clouds and darkness still. What thinking man or woman does not feel them all around us as we try, with halting step and feeble vision, to search the deep things of God? But they are as nothing to the penetrating shaft of gladdening light which from His life gleams forth for us poor puzzled folk among the world's perplexities and mysteries and wrongs, and 'shineth more and more unto the perfect day.' 'In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.'

These are thoughts, helpful and wholesome, as it seems to me, in the misty dawning of a New Year. That must needs be always a solemn thinking time —an hour when memories can be transmuted into prayers, when prayers become resolves, and when the new-born resolve ought to be able to express itself in outward life. What ought we to be praying for now on New Year's Day, 1911? What resolves ought to be taking shape? Never, perhaps, was the question more appropriate or more capable of answer than it is this week in England—on the first evening of a year which may well be an eventful one in the

history of our country. And yet the question—What ought we to be praying for?—will not, so to speak, answer itself. We must sit down or kneel down to face it and to get it clear. I am thinking for the moment not about the personal private prayers and resolves of each one of us, about our sins and shortcomings and failures in home and family life, or in what ought to be the quiet self-discipline of our own souls. Which of us does not need a sharp reminder now and then of our failures there? The hasty temper, it may be, or the petty selfishness in trifles, or the lack perhaps of courtesy and kindliness to our innermost home-circle, or that commonest of faults, the sheer stupid laziness which makes our best self so much duller and poorer than it ought to be, or, again, the sharp tongue which is allowed a loose rein when it needs a curb, or the careless gossip and unkind tittle-tattle which, without half meaning it, can do such deadly harm. I hope that not one of us begins a New Year without a clear, quiet prayer to God that He will cleanse us from our secret faults of that kind, whatever they may be (and they are not all 'secret' by any means), as well as that He will, by His grace, keep us back from great presumptuous sins lest they get the dominion over us. How utterly contemptible these commonplace, vulgar faults and failings look when we try—on a New Year's Day—to set them in array in our minds alongside the revelation of God our Father's plan

and purpose for us all—alongside the Lord's own life as man—alongside the uplifted Cross and the opened grave and the promised power—that life, in short, which was and is the Light of men!

But I should like to-night, to help you to carry your thoughts—and a congregation like this can, if it tries, carry its thoughts—to a higher level and a larger field. Everything surely in the year which has just closed goes to remind us of that larger aspect of our life—the solid, serious fact of our citizenship in the great society of kindred folk which we call a nation, and of the responsibilities which belong to us as such. It is, I need hardly remind you, a thought which runs right through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. We read of it yesterday in the great closing vision of St. John in Patmos—the vision of the nations of the earth, as such, bringing into the great celestial city the glory and honour which each nation can itself contribute. Whatever splendid ideals God may have set before us since Bible days about the universal brotherhood of men as Christ's men, and the possibility of an ultimate 'federation of the world,' we have no reason, surely, to suppose that He means us—for many a year or perhaps century to come—to unlearn the magnificent, the ennobling lesson of patriotism and national life. Why, the bettering and deepening of our national life is the very manner in which we may exercise under God in the wisest way the gift of

public spirit, and the privilege of mutual support. We do mean, please God, to make our nation as a nation, our country as a country, become a living force for the bettering of the world, and for extending among men a true allegiance to the King of kings and Lord of lords.

I have said that everything in this year that has just ended has helped to make it comparatively easy for us to realize and use the thought of the trust laid upon us as a community. Every home in our land has this year been brought, so to speak, into direct touch with the central home, the central fireside, of the whole Empire. When at midnight on May 6 the great bells in the Cathedral and Abbey towers of London boomed out over the silent city the tidings that the King was dead, they struck the keynote which vibrated, before many hours had passed, into every household in the land—nay, in the Empire—and gave, so to speak, a feeling that something had happened in each household's own life. I am not speaking now about what the King's loss meant to his people in the taking from their head a man of ripe and widely-gathered experience and capacity—a man of public spirit in the true sense, a foremost force for the peace and well-being of the world. I am thinking rather of what it all meant as evoking our sense of brotherhood in a great society, of common interests, common joys and sorrows, and therefore common possibilities and powers, which, if rightly

and thoughtfully welded into one, not for aggrandizement, but for service, could become a resistless force for the good of men. Or put it in another way. In the days which followed, we were allowed, with greater or less degree of personal knowledge, to share—I think it is not too strong a word—to share loyally in the new life-start of the son who was called with unexpected suddenness to take his father's place—a place foremost, I suppose, among the whole world's posts of honour and responsible trust. And in that start every thoughtful man or woman among us had the recollection borne in that it is *our* burden, *our* trust, as well as his; and that, by helping him to carry that solemn trust, and by saying our prayers for him and his, with him and his, day by day, we are doing the thing which is natural and right, for 'we are members one of another.' Is it not also true to say that the thoughts and sympathies and prayers are made easier for us than in our history they have sometimes been by the likeness which exists between that central English home and household and our own, in its caring for the things which we care for when at our best, the things which are pure and simple and disciplined and affectionate and true-hearted? That recollection, in the Coronation year which has just begun, should give us help in many ways.

Now, have these facts, these opportunities, meant all that they ought to have meant to us, all that God intended them to mean to us, in the last twelve

months? Or are we missing the use of a noteworthy occasion, which cannot often recur, for making every household in the land recognize a responsibility, an answerableness, which belongs in its degree to all? The unity of thought and purpose gains its significance, after all, from the oneness of our faith, our trust, our brotherhood, in Him whose life was the light of men. The purport and forcefulness of the whole matter lies in this—that that light, that guidance, is promised not to a few 'leading people,' but to every one of us; that opportunity of service is literally everybody's opportunity. The thought, then, which I am trying to leave with you to-night is this: In the Divinely-ordered progress of the world, genuine, practical force attaches to the fellowship of men and women and children in a national life—people, that is, who live in the same land, inherit the same history and traditions and usages, speak the same language, and hold, in the main, the same faith. Everything which reminds people gravely of that fellowship is, like the outward conditions themselves, a part of the loving purpose of our Father in heaven for enabling them better to promote the service which that fellowship of theirs can render to the happiness and good of the whole world. But if that is to be the outcome, it must be because people are using that fellowship deliberately, reverently, and wisely, treating it as a gift or trust from God. In proportion as that fact is recognized, and our aim is

perseveringly and prayerfully directed to what men feel to be the will of God, the national life will be sound and fruitful. The gift, like other gifts, can be neglected or misused. We want to take care that, instead, it shall be cherished by its holders and sanctified by their prayers. Therefore, my brothers—therefore, on New Year's Day, we think about our national life, and pray about it as a sacred thing. It is the thought embodied in the prayer I used with you a few minutes ago—a prayer regularly offered in each House of Parliament on every day of its session. We prayed 'that we, having Thy grace always before our eyes, and laying aside all private interests, prejudices, and partial affections . . . may promote . . . the glory of Thy blessed Name, the maintenance of true religion and justice, the safety, honour, and happiness of the King, the public wealth, peace, and tranquillity of the realm, and the uniting and knitting together of the hearts of all persons and estates within the same in true Christian love and charity one towards another.'

The wholesomeness of our national life, and therefore its service, will depend upon how far the separate men and women and children who make up that common life are contributing to it the very best of their powers, are learning the right lessons from its past history, are fashioning the soundest resolves for its future progress. Possibly, some day, some far-off day, this sacred national life, itself made up of the

combined effort and mutual self-sacrifice of its several parts, may be completely merged in the larger brotherhood of a true 'Christendom' whereof each nation is only a fragment—a fragment contributing something definite to the whole. Already the best thinkers and workers in the world, ever since Christ came to teach us to be one in Him whose life is the light of men, have been striving to make people feel that wider, deeper brotherhood. God prosper them! But meantime we can, while cherishing that larger hope, promote it best by setting ourselves, as a means to that end, to make our national life—social, commercial, educational, political—the life within our ken and our control, as soundly Christian, and as Christianly sound and true, as possible. It is God's purpose through and through, and we are following, as we believe, God's plan.

How sacred a thing, when so looked at, our English life, our English history, becomes! I remember many years ago the impression made upon my schoolboy mind by a very simple incident. In a room at Harrow some other boys and I were looking through a book well known at that time, called 'The Comic History of England,' with pictures burlesquing successive scenes in English history. Our house-master, to be known in after years to the whole world as one of our present-day prophets, Brooke Foss Westcott, Bishop of Durham, came into the room, and we called his attention to

the book we were enjoying. He quietly and gravely refused to look at it, but all he said was to ask us, in the piercingly suggestive way characteristic of him all through his life: 'Should you like somebody to write a comic Prayer-Book?' For me at least the shaft struck home, to my abiding profit.

How solemn, and yet how radiant, the whole is! 'The Lord is King, the earth may be glad thereof.' Here in Canterbury Cathedral, where on every side our eyes light upon the sacred monuments of some of England's greatest men in Church and State, in peace and war, it is not very difficult, or it ought not to be very difficult, to remember the sacredness of the whole story. It is less easy to remember it amid the clash of weekday controversy and partisanship, and competition and self-interest, and the unending strife of tongues. To have two General Elections throughout the land within less than twelve months is a rare event in our history. It may have its good side in so far as it drives home to us with reiterated force a sense of the responsibility which belongs to every home and household for the share it takes in furthering the common weal. It has its bad side in so far as it familiarizes people—to our shame be it spoken—with a manner of controversial statement in which many public men indulge, though it must be hated by the best men on either side, a manner of statement which can by no stretch of charity be called accurate or fair. It does even

graver mischief if it leads the average Christian citizen to divide his life and his interests and his ways of argument into two wholly separate departments, in one of which he descends to modes of statement, and even of action, which, in the other department—that of private or commercial or domestic life—he would, as an honourable Christian man, indignantly decline to follow.

And now in the coming months we have before us, not in Parliament only, but throughout the land, a prospect of wrangles and recriminations so acute, and possibly so persistent, as to be fraught with veritable peril to every public man who honestly desires to be absolutely straightforward and fair and true, and to apply the Christian touchstone to what he says and does. Not many of us here to-night are in any large sense public men. But everyone here to-night has a share in the matter. It is not a question of voting, only or mainly. It is a question of the common standard, the common level of thought, the common aim and purpose, which we have and hold, with respect to the life of a Christian people in the twentieth century of the Christian era. The tone, the level, of our public men, is likely to depend after all upon the raising or lowering of the common level all round them. They may stand out above that level, but its height will influence theirs. Some twenty years ago a great President of the United States drew a contrast between the hot

enthusiasm of an emotional hour and the permanent level of our common life:

'I have seen the sea,' he says, 'lashed into fury and tossed into spray, and its grandeur moves the soul of the dullest man; but . . . it is when the storm has passed and the hour of calm settles on the ocean, when the sunlight bathes its peaceful surface, that men take the level from which they measure all terrestrial heights and depths.'

Be it ours, my friends, to set ourselves to the raising of that common level, in our own lives and around us. Test it for ourselves and our circles by the touchstone of the life and words of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose followers we profess to be, in whose Name we were baptized, whose words and acts are perfectly familiar to us all; whose life was and is the light of men. 'The light of men,' the means, that is to say, of seeing and judging how we stand and what it is all worth, and whether or no our standard will bear, even in the slightest and remotest degree, the application to it of that which He left us. Can you, on New Year's Day, when you take quiet stock of your life and try to look at it, as it were, from outside, and then kneel down to say your prayers—can you then recognize in your ordinary daily conduct, as you review it, any deliberate and sustained effort to forget yourself and your own interests for the sake of other people and the common good? Any effort for the maintenance, at some

self-sacrifice, of a better and purer tone, a higher ideal of what the social intercourse and habits and doings of a Christian people, soldiers and servants of a living Lord, ought to be? Look at it calmly, even severely, as regards home life and commercial life and civic life and all that goes to the establishing of 'accepted usages' in great things or small. In Him was life, and the life was—for the smallest things as well as the greatest—the light of men.

Remember this. No mere resolving at the beginning of a year to be strong and straight and pure and generous and true will be enough. In a general way we all mean to do and be these things. We should be indignant with anybody who said we did not. But that is not enough. You will fail as you have failed before. If the victory is to be won, if the path is to be held, if the life is to be lived, it must be in another Power than yours—a Power which comes when the knee is bended and the head is bowed—a Power which comes most of all, and most naturally of all, when in the Lord's own Sacrament of His Love you come to Him who is—not 'was' only, but 'is'—the light of men. He can do it for you and in you. And He will:

> 'Thou hast no power, nor mayest conceive of Mine,
> But love I gave thee, with Myself to love,
> And thou must love Me, who have died for thee.'*

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* Browning, 'Epistle of Karshish.'

He comes to us, if we will let Him come, when we need Him most. In the words of a striking German writer, whose views of the Gospel story may not be ours, but who teaches us about the Master with extraordinary power:

'He comes to us . . . as of old by the lakeside He came to those men who knew Him not. He speaks to us the same words, "Follow thou Me," and sets us to the tasks which He has to fulfil for our time. He commands. And to those who obey Him, whether they be wise or simple, He will reveal Himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which they shall pass through in His fellowship; and, as an ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience who He is.'*

A happy New Year, brothers and sisters, to you all. 'The Lord is King, the earth may be glad thereof: yea, the multitude of the isles may be glad thereof.' 'In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.'

* Schweitzer, 'The Quest of the Historical Jesus,' p. 401.

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